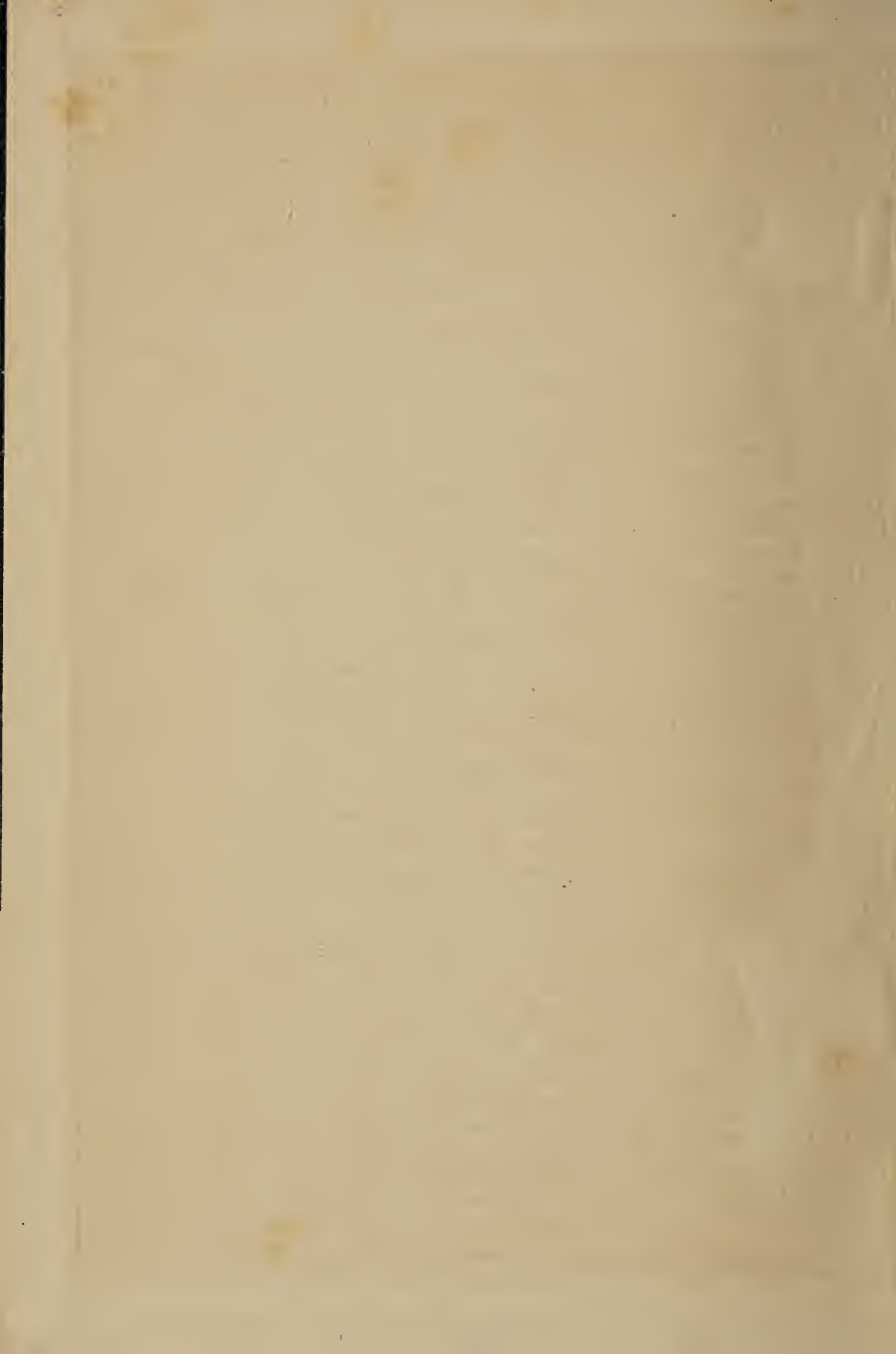


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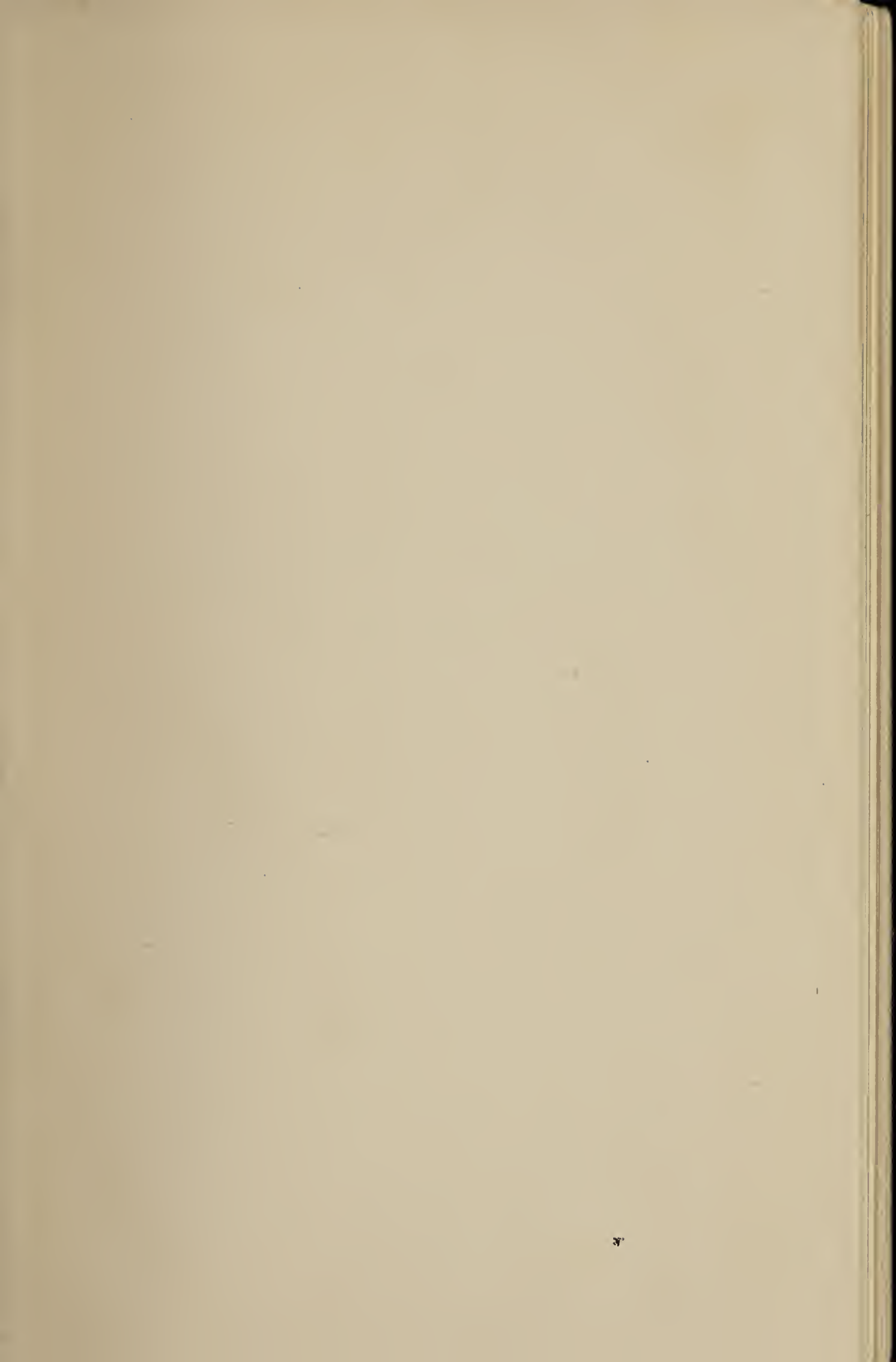


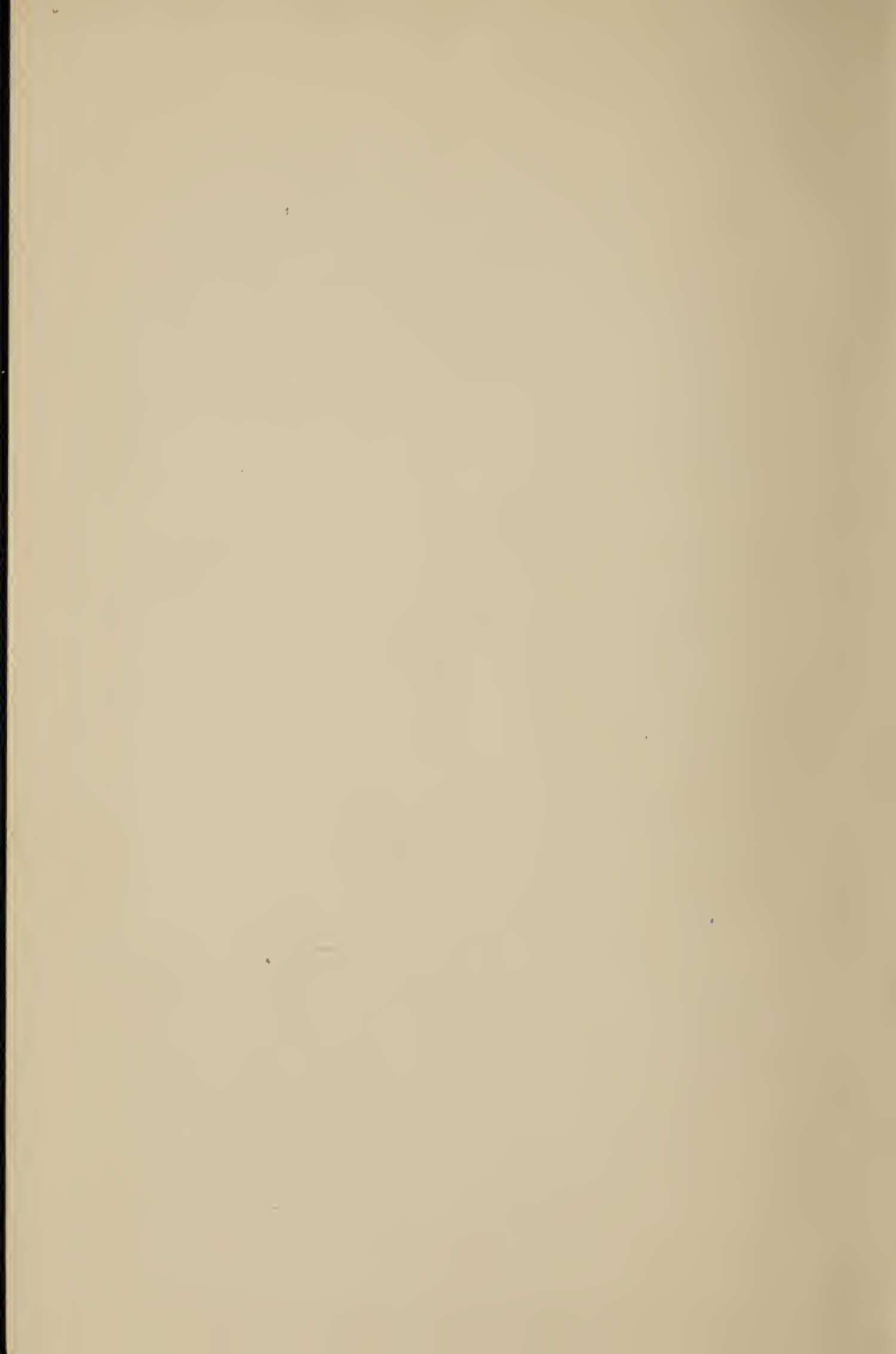
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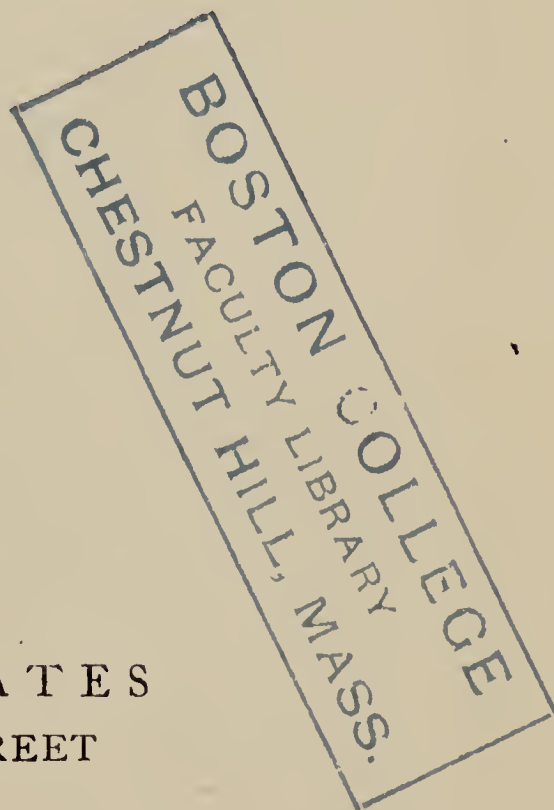
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# THE FIRST TWELVE CHAPTERS OF ISAIAH

A NEW TRANSLATION AND  
COMMENTARY

BY THE REVEREND  
GEORGE S. HITCHCOCK, D.D.

DOCTOR OF SACRED SCRIPTURE, ROME



BURNS & OATES  
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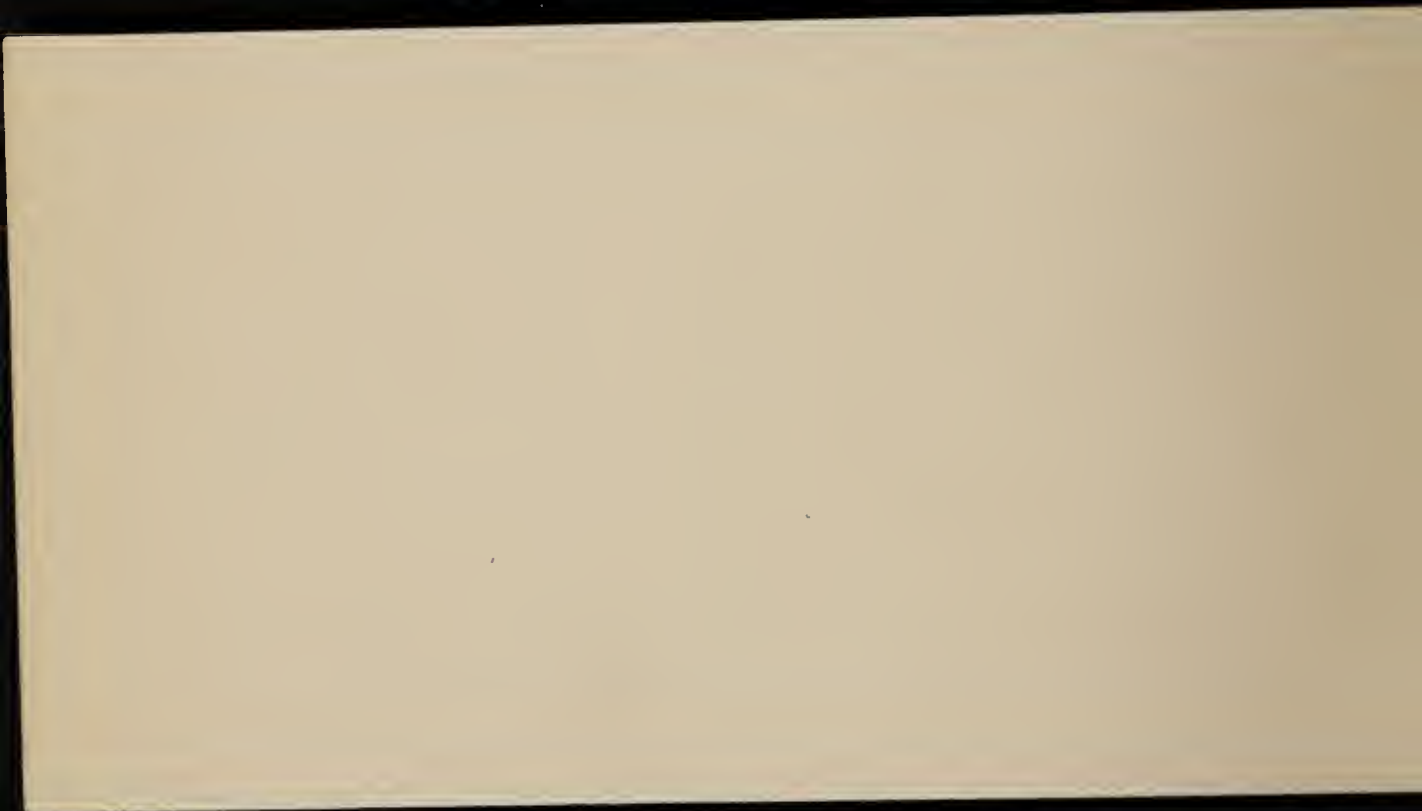
## ERRATA

Fly-leaf, line 13, *for* '1s. 6d. net' *read* '1s.'

Page 12, lines 2 and 6, *for* 'Ashur' *read* 'Asshur.'

„ line 11, *for* 734 *read* 740.

*The First Twelve Chapters of Isaiah.*



## PREFACE

IN this book I venture to offer the first twelve chapters of Isaiah in a new translation with a commentary. No one will question the importance of the subject; and perhaps there is no series of passages better suited to introduce a student to the Old Testament problems of textual, documentary, and exegetical criticism. Nor is there any lack of interest, though twenty-six centuries have tramped with warrior feet across the world, since Isaiah heard the din of Assyrian legions and announced the coming of the King Immanuel.

With regard to the translation, I have acted on the principle that workers in the Old Testament ought to be scientific students and not literary artists. Therefore I have not rendered these Hebrew prophecies as we are accustomed to construe Greek tragedies, but so as to present the meaning in a form approaching that of the original as nearly as possible. In the result, we find the lyrical utterance of an imagination more spacious than Francis Thompson's, of a brain more masculine than Browning's, and of a breast more daring than Carlyle's. Naturally, therefore, his speech, like theirs, is more uneven, broken, and obscure than a couplet by Pope, a song by Tennyson, or a paragraph by Ruskin or De Quincey. It was indeed no flute God inspired when this Isaian music rose above the roar of imperial war and city discords. It was a true man, the Athanasius of his time; and his strength was in the sense of human

weakness and Divine faithfulness, that led him to fling himself, as he would have flung his people, on the living God.

As to the commentary, I have spared no pains to make the meaning of the text clear and certain. For this purpose, I have of course weighed the lexical and grammatical evidence, and framed the prophecies in the circumstances of Isaiah's time. Whether all my conclusions are justified by the arguments adduced in their support, others may, and indeed will, judge. But with regard to those from whom I am constrained to differ, it would be wrong to suppose that I do so without respect for their scholarship. And especially as to Dr. Cheyne, I am not unmindful that he has done much to open a new era in Hebrew learning, not only by his constant labour in that field, but also by communicating his own enthusiasm to others. I would ask his permission to dedicate this book to him, were it not that others might misunderstand. He himself would not, his own honesty of purpose leading him to recognise similar honesty of purpose in those whose decisions are other than his own. And he, I am confident, would acknowledge that I have done my best to view the successive questions fairly and to express a candid judgment plainly.

In devotion to my patron, St. Jerome, and to the Holy See, I yield to none. Though I am not a Catholic by birth, yet I am such by conviction and conversion, and therefore recognise the authority of the Catholic Church, the Presence of Incarnate God in Her, and the guidance of Her by God the Holy Ghost. Whatever I write in this book is submitted to Her judgment. She, I confess, cannot err, for an error on Her part would imply that the Gates of Hell had prevailed against Her. If I have



departed in some respects from St. Jerome's translation, I have done what St. Jerome himself would not have been slow to do. His Vulgate is authentic or authoritative. It neither contains any error in faith or morals, nor gives any basis for such. But it is not inspired, for as St. Jerome in his *Preface to the Pentateuch* reminds us, it is one thing to be a prophet, another to be a translator. Nor is perfect accuracy claimed for the Latin Vulgate as a version, for Roman theologians, in discussing the matter with delegates from Trent, urged that it contains many mistakes, which cannot be attributed to copyists or printers. Nor did the Tridentine Fathers, in recognising the authenticity of the Vulgate by their decree of March 17, 1546, in any way deny the authenticity of the original texts and ancient versions. Indeed the Roman Martyrology for Christmas Day follows the chronology of the Greek Vulgate, not that of the Latin. And it is noteworthy that in 1563, the Dominican Forerius, a member and defender of the Tridentine Council, published the Latin Vulgate of *Isaiah*, together with a new and literal translation from the Hebrew and a commentary; and he dedicated the work to the Council.

As in my book on the *Higher Criticism of Isaiah*, I have spelt Old Testament names and referred to Old Testament books in the mode familiar to English-speaking peoples. I have done so to render my book less strange to Protestant readers. We must live and work among them for the Catholic Kingdom of God; and the enlargement of the kingdom will not be hastened by a barrier of spelling and nomenclature. If missionaries may wear the dress of the people they would win, it cannot be very perilous to use "Isaiah" instead of "Isaias" or to write "Deborah" instead of "Debbora" in an English sentence.

I cannot send out my book without acknowledging how much it owes to the generous kindness of Mrs. Philomène Caron Lawlor and Miss Lilla Pickwoad, and to the encouragement of the Right Reverend Monsignor John Prior, D.D., Auditor of the Roman Rota, the Very Reverend Canon James Keatinge, and the Very Reverend Dr. Joseph Wilhelm.

ST. AUGUSTINE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH,  
TUNBRIDGE WELLS, *May* 17, 1911.

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# THE FIRST TWELVE CHAPTERS OF ISAIAH

## CHAPTER I

IN the year 698, Hezekiah's son, Manasseh, then a boy of twelve years, ascended the Judean throne in Jerusalem. The land was exposed to bands of marauders; and the king was misled by those who desired foreign alliances and foreign cults. Assyrian rites were introduced into Jerusalem, peace was made with Sennacherib, and tribute was paid to Assyria. For half-a-century, all that Isaiah had stood for seemed annihilated. Then, in 648, a great conspiracy of Akkah, Chaldea, Elam, Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, and Arabia, led by Shamash-shumukin, king of Babylon and son of Esarhaddon, was formed against his brother Asshur-banipal, king of Assyria. Babylon fell, and the leader of the rebels perished in the flames of his own palace. In the following year, 647, Asshur-banipal was crowned king of Babylon in that city, to which Manasseh was led as a rebel, with manacles on his hands and a hook in his nostrils. From Babylon, Manasseh returned in penitence to purge Jerusalem of idolatry.

In the early years of Manasseh's reign, Isaiah collected and completed his prophecies. At the new king's accession, the prophet was about seventy years of age, and



## 2 THE FIRST TWELVE CHAPTERS OF ISAIAH

had prophesied for forty-two years, counting from the vision in the year of Uzziah's death, that is, in 740. In Jotham's reign 740-735, he had, in cc. ii.-v., his "Book of the Vineyard," foretold the Assyrian invasion of Judah. Under Ahaz, 735-727, he had in cc. vi.-xii., his "Book of Emmanuel," denounced the alliance of Judah with Assyria. During Hezekiah's reign, 727-698, he had, in cc. xiii.-xxiii. his "Book of the Nations," prophesied against the kingdoms from Babylon to Ethiopia. In those days he also wrote the final judgment of the world in his "Book of the Apocalypse," cc. xxiv.-xxvii. When Sennacherib in 701, was about to cage the Judean king in Jerusalem, Isaiah wrote his "Book of Woes," cc. xxviii.-xxxiii., against those who trusted in Egypt. About the same time, he composed cc. xxxiv.-xxxv., his "Book of the Two Standards," to announce the final judgment, Edom and Zion standing respectively for the enemies and the subjects of God. To these works an extract from his own history of Sennacherib's invasion, cc. xxxvi. and xxxvii., was added in the early years of Manasseh's reign, that is, soon after 698 B.C., or soon after 681 B.C., if the note in Isaiah xxxvii. 38, regarding Sennacherib's death was added by Isaiah himself, the prophet being then about eighty-five years of age. Returning to an earlier period of the history, Isaiah describes Hezekiah's illness of 713 B.C. and Merodach-Baladan's embassy, which followed. These chapters, xxxviii. and xxxix., serve as an introduction to the prophecies of Restoration, cc. xl.-lxvi. The latter work having been added, the prophet prefixes his prologue :

- i. 1. The vision of Isaiah ben-Amoz,  
Which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem  
In the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah,  
Kings of Judah.

In this title, Judah, as representing the Kingdom of God amidst hostile States, is mentioned before Jerusalem, the seat of the Temple. The reigning king, Manasseh, is not named. Then referring to the Song of Moses, in which the heavens and the earth had been constituted witnesses of the Divine covenant with Israel, he called them to witness the faithlessness of the people. First, he points to the nation's ingratitude:

i. 2. Hear, Heavens:

Give ear, Earth; for Jehovah has spoken.

I nourished and reared sons;

And they, they revolted against Me.

i. 3. An ox knew its owner:

And an ass its master's stable.

Israel knew not:

My people did not show it understood.

Then in the second strophe he denounces their apostasy.

i. 4. Woe! sinning nation,

People, heavy with iniquity.

Seed of evil-doers,

Sons corrupting [their way].

They forsook Jehovah;

They spurned the Holy One of Israel;

They are estranged backward.

The last line is a condensed expression to imply the people's alienation from God, and a return into their former evil condition, as the apostasy of Manasseh repeated that of Ahaz. There is therefore no need to conjecture another reading of the Hebrew text. It may be noted that the word "sons" is a key-word of the passage; in the former strophe, it indicates Israel's Divine calling;

#### 4 THE FIRST TWELVE CHAPTERS OF ISAIAH

and in the latter, it denotes the children of apostates. It is also to be noted that the two couplets illustrate the parallelism, which is the main feature of Hebrew poetry, the first couplet forming synonymous parallels, but the second synthetic parallels, as the second line adds a new notion to its predecessor. The triplet is constituted by three synonymous parallels, each line describing the apostasy of Israel. Antithetic parallelism is found in the first couplet of the next strophe, the prophet replying to the people's apparent invocation of judgment on themselves with an assurance of its uselessness. And in this third strophe, the prophet draws attention to the strokes of Divine judgment that have already fallen on the people.

- i. 5. Why will you be struck again ?  
You will rebel again.

Every head is ailing ;  
And every heart sick.

6. From sole of foot and unto head,  
There is no soundness in it.

Wound and scar  
And recent stroke—

They are not pressed, nor bound,  
Nor is it softened with oil.

Misled perhaps by Ovid's line,

Now a new blow can scarce find room on you,

many have translated the first word of this strophe by "whereon." But the Targum, as well as the Greek and Syriac Vulgates, besides the sense of the second line and that of the Hebrew phrase in the thirteen other places of its occurrence, suggests its translation by "why." As to the

state of the people, they are, as it were, covered with wounds, from which the foul matter has not been pressed. The sores fester openly, neither bandaged with linen nor soothed with oil. Now the prophet begins a new strophe to describe the devastation of the land, in language that recalls the curses of *Leviticus* xxvi., and *Deuteronomy* xxviii. upon apostates. And in comparing the desolation to "the overthrow of strangers," he makes the word "strangers" the more emphatic, in that it ends the line as it began the preceding clause. On its first occurrence, it includes the many wasters of Judah—Assyrians, Syrians, Israelites, and others. The second time, it refers directly to the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, so there is no need to substitute the word "Sodom" for the word "strangers," as some suggest on the ground that this word "overthrow" occurs in five other places and always in the phrase "the overthrow," or, more accurately, "the overthrown condition of Sodom." Says the prophet in his fourth strophe :

i. 7. Your land—desolation :

Your fortresses—burnt with fire.

Your soil before you—strangers eat it :

And [it is] a desolation like the overthrow of strangers.

8. And there is left the daughter of Zion,

Like a hut in a vineyard,

Like a lodge in a cucumber-field,

Like a besieged fortress.

9. Unless Jehovah of Hosts

Had left us a remnant like a trifle,

We had become like Sodom,

We had resembled Gomorrah.

"The daughter of Zion," though the phrase generally



## 6 THE FIRST TWELVE CHAPTERS OF ISAIAH

refers to the citizens, here primarily means the city itself. As to the difficulties of the word rendered "besieged," these are solved by deriving it from the verb, generally signifying "to observe," but used here as in Job's expression, vii. 20, "Thou watcher of men" to imply hostile watching. The word for "cucumber-field," *miqsháh*, is a noun of place, formed from *qishshu'ím*, "cucumbers." The lodge was the booth of branches, built on four upright poles for the caretaker. Then God is named Jehovah of Hosts, Jehovah of the angelic armies and natural forces, to emphasise the insignificance of the few Judeans who survive. The word translated "like a trifle" emphasises the smallness of the remnant, but it is not necessary to the sense, and may have been interpolated in the Hebrew text, as it is not found in the Vulgates, Greek, Latin, or Syriac, nor in the Old Latin Version. "Sodom" is a key-word of the passage, and is resumed in the fifth strophe, which denounces religious ritual divorced from religious virtue. But first, the prophet summons all Jerusalem to hear the revelation he has received.

- i. 10. Hear the word of Jehovah, magistrates of Sodom :  
Give ear to the law of our God, people of Gomorrah.

What is the multitude of your sacrifices to me ?  
Jehovah will say.

I am sated with holocausts of rams and the fat of fatlings :  
And I delight not in the blood of bullocks and lambs and  
he-goats.

12. When you come to see My Face,  
Who requested this at your hand—to trample My courts ?
13. Do not again bring a vain offering :  
Incense—it is an abomination to Me.



New moon and Sabbath !  
To call an assembly !

I cannot [endure] iniquity and solemnity :  
14. My soul has hated your new moons and festivals.

They have become a burden upon Me :  
I have laboured to bear [them].

15. And when you spread out your hands, I shall hide My  
eyes from you :  
Further, when you multiply prayer, I am not hearing.

It is clear from such passages as the promise in c. lvi. 7, to accept holocausts and sacrifices, to say nothing of the direct commands regarding such things, that the condemnation is not of the rites but of the spirit in which they had been performed. It is not the prescribed New Moon or Sabbath or the solemn convocation that offend, but the union of iniquity and solemnity. With regard to v. 12, it is to be noted that the Massoretes, working from our sixth to our tenth century, pointed the word we have rendered "to see," so that it means "to appear," and therefore requires the phrase to be translated "to appear before My Face." In this they followed the Greek Vulgate, which rendered it "to appear to Me," apparently to avoid the suggestion of seeing God with the eye of flesh. Yet a vision of God in some sense was held possible, for the Psalmist, xi. 7, assures us that "the upright shall see His Face."

The sixth strophe is directed against the violence and wrong prevalent in Jerusalem.

Your hands are full of blood :  
i. 16. Wash, cleanse yourselves.

Remove the evil of your deeds from before My eyes :  
Cease to do evil.

## 8 THE FIRST TWELVE CHAPTERS OF ISAIAH

17. Learn to do good :  
Seek [just] judgment.

Direct an oppressed man ;  
Judge for an orphan ;  
Plead for a widow.

The triplet, with which the strophe concludes, enumerates the three classes, men, children, and women, who suffered wrong. As to the word for "oppressed," some would render it actively as "oppressor," but since a similar form is translated passively as "girded," and the Greek, Syriac, and Latin Vulgates, as well as the Aramaic Targum, all render the word passively, we translate it as "oppressed." In the seventh strophe, the prophet announces God's challenge to Judah.

- i. 18. Come, I pray, and let us implead one another,  
Jehovah will say.

If your sins become like scarlet vestments,  
They shall be made white as snow.

If they be made red as the crimson worm,  
They shall become as wool.

19. If you be willing and hear,  
You shall eat the good of the land.

20. And if you refuse and disobey,  
You shall eat a sword.

For the Mouth of Jehovah has spoken it.

Some difficulty has been felt regarding the sentence, "You shall eat a sword." The Greek Vulgate rendered it, "A sword shall eat you"; and the Massoretes pointed the verb as passive and intensive, so that the sentence might mean "You shall be devoured [with] a sword." But it is acknowledged that there is an Arabic expression

“to give one the sword to eat,” that is, to kill him; and the “sword” is contrasted with the “good of the land” in the preceding couplet, so there is no need to abandon the rendering we have adopted. To further the imploring, to which God has invited Judah, the prophet’s eighth strophe contains the indictment, charging Jerusalem, the Bride espoused to Jehovah at the first Passover, with faithlessness; and then in metaphor, followed in Isaianic fashion by plain speech, he denounces the faithlessness of the Judean rulers. He describes the former state of the city, and its hope for the future, to contrast it with its present condition as a refuge for murderers.

- i. 21. How has she become a harlot,  
[She that was] a faithful city.

[She is] full of [just] judgment;  
Justice will lodge in her—  
But now murderers.

22. Thy silver has become dross:  
Thy liqueur is mixed with water.

23. Thy princes are rebels and companions of thieves,  
Every one loving a bribe and chasing rewards.

They will not judge for an orphan;  
And the plea of a widow will not come to them.

With regard to the sentence, “Thy princes are rebels,” it is to be noted that it is alliterative, as Isaiah’s phrases often are; and, therefore, Cheyne has suggested the rendering, “Thy rulers are unruly.” It may also have been a proverbial expression. In any case, *Hosea*, ix. 15, had employed it about the time of Isaiah’s earliest prophecies. In the ninth strophe, the prophet repeats such key-words of the eighth as “dross,” “judgment,” “justice,” and “faithful city.” And in his own manner,

## 10 THE FIRST TWELVE CHAPTERS OF ISAIAH

he uses the word “therefore” to introduce an announcement of purification through suffering.

- i. 24. Therefore it is decreed of the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts,  
The Strong One of Israel.

Ah! I shall be consoled of My adversaries :  
And I shall be avenged of My enemies.

25. And let Me return My hand upon you ;  
And I shall purify thy dross as with alkali.  
And I shall remove all thy tin.

26. And let Me return thy judges as at the first,  
And thy counsellors as in the beginning.

Afterwards thou shalt be called the Fortress of Justice,  
A faithful City.

27. Zion will be redeemed with [just] judgment,  
And her returning ones with justice.

28. And the shattering of revolvers and sinners together !  
And the forsakers of Jehovah will be consumed.

In the tenth strophe, the coming judgment is specially connected with the revival of idolatry under Manasseh. Not long before, the prophet had denounced licentious orgies under terebinth trees, lvii. 5, as well as sacrifices in gardens, lxv. 3 ; lxvi. 17. In the early days of Hezekiah's reign, he had shown, xvii. 10, how the apostasy of Northern Israel had led that people to imitate Syrians and Phœnicians in cultivating the gardens of Adonis, or *Adonî*, “my lord,” the Babylonian Dumuzi or Tammuz, a god of earthly love, in whose honour slips were planted in pots to flower and wither the selfsame day. Now he says :

- i. 29. For they shall be confounded for terebinths, which you  
desired ;  
And you shall be ashamed for the gardens, which you chose.



30. For you shall become like a terebinth [at] the falling of  
its leaf,  
And like a garden, which has no water.

31. And the powerful man shall become tow ;  
And his work a spark.

And both of them shall be devoured together,  
And there is no one extinguishing.

In v. 30, the word for “falling” is a feminine participle, agreeing therefore with “terebinth” and not with “leaf.” If we interpret this last word as an accusative of respect, and follow about fifty Hebrew manuscripts in reading it as a plural, the phrase runs literally “a terebinth falling [as to] its leaves.” The sense is quite plain as the description of a withering tree. In v. 31, we have followed the Greek Vulgate in pointing the Hebrew consonants of one word, so that it means “his work,” rather than accept the Massoretic vowels, which make it mean “his maker.”

## CHAPTER II

IN 783, Shalmaneser III began to reign over Assyria, which suffered much at that time from Armenia. Ashur-dan III succeeded in 773, and found the forces of his empire still further wasted in plague and rebellion as well as in war with Damascus and the district to the north of it. Ashur-nirari II mustered an army to attack Arpad of North Syria in the first year of his reign, 754; and then, during the years attributed to Romulus at Rome, he remained passive, while the Syrian States took advantage of his weakness to make themselves strong. Those were the days when Uzziah, 790-734, reigned over Judah, and Jeroboam II, 784-744, over Israel. If success in commercial and military enterprises counts for much, that was the golden age of those kingdoms. The rich became very rich; and the poor very poor. Large estates absorbed the farms of freemen. Women became luxurious and callous. And what was considered religion included a desire for the Day of the Lord, regarded as bringing universal victory and empire to Hebrew arms.

In 745 B.C., however, a soldier of fortune, Tiglath-pileser III, seized the Assyrian throne, and was successful also against Armenia and a confederation of small districts in North Syria. He deposed Panammu bar-Qaral, who has left us the earliest extant inscription in Aramaic on the Gergin statue of Hadad; and on the throne of Ya'di and Sam'al he placed another Panammu, whose son has left us the Aramaic inscriptions of



Zinjirli. These inscriptions are serviceable in describing the deportation of conquered nations and in indicating the religious outlook of North Syria in the days of Isaiah. There was worship of the sun-god Hadad, El, Rekub-el, "the chariot of god," Shemesh, "the sun," Resheph "the lightning," and Aroq-Resheph. For the dead there was sacrifice to Hadad, and prayer that their souls might eat and drink with that god. And there was also a world of wicked souls under the dominion of King Adar.

Among the vassals of Tiglath-pileser III, we find the Syrian Rezin or Rezon of Damascus and the Israelite Menahem of Samaria. Those were the days of Jotham, 740-735, when the subject condition of Damascus and Samaria left Jerusalem free to develop its own resources, and Tiglath-pileser III, at least during the years 737-735, was occupied in Media and Armenia. Yet Isaiah rose to warn his fellow-citizens of coming doom. After his vision in the year 740, when Uzziah died and Jotham ascended the Judean throne, he delivered the prophecies cc. ii.-v., which form his "Book of the Vineyard" and his work under Jotham. This small volume is superscribed

- ii. 1. The word, which Isaiah ben-Amoz saw  
Concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

It is not necessary to interpret the "word" seen as referring to some special mode of inspiration, as the "word" is synonymous with "thing" or "cause."

Then the prophet proceeds to quote a passage, composed or copied earlier by Micah, his rustic contemporary, who will repeat it later. In the opening line, there is an expression, "the end of the days," found in similar form in the Assyrian of Isaiah's day. In the Assyrian it simply signifies the future; and such might well be its connotation here; but the prophet charges the word

## 14 THE FIRST TWELVE CHAPTERS OF ISAIAH

with fuller meaning, so that it implies the end of the preparatory dispensation and the coming of the Messianic or Christian kingdom. It looks off to the Apostles and their preaching, "beginning from Jerusalem," *Luke* xxiv. 47, for then the revelation or light of Jehovah will become the light of the world.

- ii. 2. And it shall happen at the end of the days,  
The Mountain of the House of the Lord

[Shall be] established at the head of the mountains,  
And shall be lifted above the hills.

And all the nations will stream to it,

3. And many peoples will go ;

And they will say, Come,  
And let us ascend to the mountain of Jehovah,  
To the house of the God of Jacob.

And He will teach us of His ways ;  
And let us walk in His paths.

For law will issue from Zion,  
And the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.

4. And He will judge between the nations ;  
And He will decide concerning many peoples.

And they will beat their swords into ploughshares,  
And their spears into sickles.

Nation will not bear sword against nation.  
And they will not learn war any more.

With this vision of the Messianic kingdom, the prophet contrasts the apostate condition of Israel and the judgment involved in the Day of the Lord. The first of three unequal strophes describes the people, and commences with an invitation suggested by Micah's prediction.

- ii. 5. House of Jacob, come,  
And let us walk in the light of Jehovah.

In the next line, we follow the Greek Vulgate in reading "He" for "Thou," so preserving continuity of thought and reference.

- ii. 6. For He has left His people,  
The House of Jacob.

For they are full from the east.  
And are cloud-diviners like the Philistines;  
And they clap with the children of aliens.

It will be noted that we see no sufficient reason for reading "divination" instead of "from the east." The Massoretic or traditional Hebrew text is here supported by the Hebrew text underlying the Greek Vulgate. The triplet contains three distinct charges, that is, pagan customs, witchcraft, and alliances with aliens. Then looking again at the people as a whole, the prophet adds :

- ii. 7. And its land is filled with silver and gold;  
And there is no end to its treasures.

And its land is filled with horses,  
And there is no end to its chariots.

8. And its land is filled with idols:  
To the work of its hands—they bow themselves!—  
To what its fingers made.

When Isaiah mentions the false gods, he names them "idols," "vanities," or "nonentities," *'ēlîlîm*, as a play on the word for "mighty ones," "gods," *ēlîm*. In the next verse we preserve the distinction between *ādām*, "a human being," and *'îsh*, "a man," by rendering the former as "one." The Latin *homo* and *vir* would exactly fit the Hebrew words. And now the refrain of the strophe follows.

- ii. 9. And one will be bowed;  
And a man will be humbled;  
And Thou shalt not forgive them.

## 16 THE FIRST TWELVE CHAPTERS OF ISAIAH

10. Come into the rock ;  
And be hidden in the dust

From the face of the terror of Jehovah  
And from the splendour of His sublimity.

11. The eyes of one's highness are humbled ;  
And the loftiness of men is bowed.

And Jehovah alone is exalted in that Day,  
For [there is] a Day for Jehovah of Hosts.

The second strophe announces the nature of the Lord's Day to be other than one of imperial victory for Israel's earthly arms. It is a Day

- ii. 12. Upon everything sublime and lofty,  
And upon everything uplifted ;  
And it shall be humbled.

13. And upon all the cedars of Lebanon,  
That are lofty and uplifted.  
And upon all the oaks of Bashan.

14. And upon all the lofty mountains,  
And upon all the uplifted hills.

15. And upon every high tower,  
And upon every fortified wall.

16. And upon all the ships of Tarshish,  
And upon the desirable images.

In announcing the destruction of the cedars and oaks, the prophet foretells an Assyrian invasion of Northern Israel. About 2650 B.C. Gudea, the chief of Babylonian Lagesh, had adorned a temple with cedar from Lebanon. The same forests were despoiled by such Egyptian kings as Tahutimes III. in 1482, and by Seti I about a century and a half later, both of these kings reigning while Israel



was in Egypt. The Lebanon or White Mountain is named indeed from the perpetual snow on its eastern ridge; but the forests at its foot, according to the "Broken Obelisk," afforded Tiglath-pileser I of Assyria the hunting of wild cattle and elephants in the days of Saul. Isaiah now, about 739, is looking forward to such an expedition as that of Shalmaneser IV and Sargon II, which involved the fall of Samaria and Northern Israel in 722. The prophecy attained a more complete fulfilment in the days when Esarhaddon, soon after his succession in 681, compelled twenty-two of his western vassals, including Manasseh of Jerusalem, to carry cedars of Lebanon to the royal palace at Nineveh.

As to the ships of Tarshish, these may mean such large trading vessels as those which sailed from Tyre to Tarshish or Tartessus in Spain. Solomon's ships of Tarshish, 1 *Kings* x. 22, brought him gold, silver, ivory, apes and peacocks, and therefore presumably traded with the east. Jehoshaphat's, 1 *Kings* xxii. 48, sailed to Ophir in Arabia, and probably from Elath in the gulf of Akaba. Elath in Jotham's time remained a Judean port. Not till the reign of his son Ahaz did it pass into Syrian hands. So we may well suppose that the expression "ships of Tarshish" had come to mean simply a large trading vessel, unless indeed we assume a Tarshish in the east.

We may note at the same time that the expression "fortified wall" is literally a "wall cut off," that is, from approach. And the expression "desirable images" is literally "images of desirableness," the meaning "images" being obtained from the Aramaic root, signifying "to view," and the word "images," because it is parallel to "ships of Tarshish," possibly refers to the figures at their prows.

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Now we take up the refrain of the strophe.

- ii. 17. And one's highness is bowed ;  
And men's loftiness is humbled.

And Jehovah alone is exalted in that Day ;  
18. And the idols—it shall pass completely.

19. And they shall come into caves of rocks,  
And into holes of dust.

From the face of the terror of Jehovah  
And from the splendour of His sublimity,  
When He rises to terrify the earth.

This last expression to “terrify the earth” is a paronomasia in the Hebrew. It is difficult to reproduce the verbal play in English, though in Latin it may be represented by “*ut terreat terram.*”

Now there is a third strophe to announce the fate of those who worshipped the idols.

- ii. 20. In that day, one shall send  
His idols of silver and his idols of gold—  
Which they made for him to bow himself—  
To the moles and to the bats,

21. To come into the borings of the rocks  
And into the clefts of the cliffs

From the face of the terror of Jehovah  
And from the splendour of His sublimity  
When He rises to terrify the earth.

Then a word is added for those who trusted Assyria or Egypt, and for those who feared Syria and Northern Israel.

- ii. 22. Cease ye from one,  
Whose breath is in his nose ;  
For at what is he estimated ?



## CHAPTER III

Now, in seven strophes, the prophet announces the future of Judah. We note the catalogue of influential persons to be carried captive, as we have already had a list, ii. 12-16, of those things on which the Day of the Lord shall fall, and as Isaiah will presently enumerate the women's ornaments, iii. 18-23, to be exchanged for badges of servitude. Further, he would express Judah's complete loss of help. To do this, he uses the Hebrew word for "support" first in the masculine form and then in the feminine, to gain an effect like that of our "bag and baggage."

The first strophe describes the removal of all who wield authority.

iii. 1. For behold the Lord Jehovah of Hosts,  
Removing every support from Jerusalem and from  
Judah,

Every support of bread  
And every support of water,

2. Hero and man of war,  
Judge and prophet,

And diviner and elder,

3. The prince of fifty men and the uplifted of face,

And counsellor and the man wise in engraving  
And the man intelligent in incantation.

The second strophe tells us of the resultant anarchy. It is to be noted that the word we render "vexations" in

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the first couplet, is sometimes translated “babes,” “caprices,” “petulant ones.” It occurs in one other place, lxvi. 4, and is there generally explained as “delusions” or “follies.”

iii. 4. And I shall give lads to be their princes ;  
And vexations shall rule them.

5. And the people will oppress one another,  
And each his neighbour.

And they will be insolent—the lad to the elder,  
And the despised to the honoured.

6. For a man will take hold of his brother,  
Of the house of his father,

[Saying], Thou hast a cloak ;  
Thou wilt be a magistrate for us ;  
And this ruin [will be] under thy hand.

7. And he will lift [his voice] in that Day to say,  
I will not be a binder.

And in my house there is no bread and no cloak :  
You shall not place me as magistrate of the people.

So even he who is offered a village rulership refuses to be a “binder,” a name that may mean a binder up and healer or a binder and controller.

The third strophe traces the ruin to the sins of the people, who opposed God and disobeyed “His glorious eyes,” or literally “the eyes of His Glory.”

iii. 8. For Jerusalem is ruined ;  
And Judah has fallen.

For their tongue and their deeds [were] against Jehovah  
To disobey His glorious eyes.

9. The glance of their faces answered against them ;  
And like Sodom, they declared their sin ;  
They did not conceal.

“The glance of their faces” happily expresses the shamelessness of the people; and there is no need to translate the expression as “their respecting of persons,” for the reference is to all Judah and not to the judges alone. This line will suggest the theme for the next strophe, in which Jehovah will plead against His people. The first line of the next couplet means “woe to themselves,” the soul as often standing for the self. The couplet declares of the people that the evil they suffer is the evil they have earned by the evil they have done. As to v. 10, it is not necessary to change the “Say you” into “Happy is,” in order to obtain a more complete correspondence with the next couplet. Such a conjecture might suggest a somewhat pedantic bias. With Delitzsch, we will do better to retain the text of the manuscripts and versions. The strophe continues :

Woe to their soul,  
For they have recompensed themselves evil.

iii. 10. Say of a just man, that [it is] good [for him],  
For they shall eat the fruit of their deeds.

11. Woe to a wicked man ; [it is] evil [for him],  
For the recompense of his hands shall be done to him.

In the fourth strophe, the prophet, in the name of God, condemns the rulers of Judah for injustice, and denounces the influence of caprice, in the sway of the king by his young son. It may well be that we are here approaching the end of Jotham's reign and the rise of Ahaz, who was in 738 a lad of seventeen years. It will be noticed that God's judgment is now extended to the peoples of the world, and that Israel is described as God's Vineyard. In the next strophe, the prophet will denounce the extravagances of the women. And in the first couplet, it will be better to follow the text under-

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lying the Greek Vulgate, Aquila's Version and Theodotion's, as well as the parallelism with "exactors," in pointing the Hebrew consonants to read "creditors" instead of "women."

- iii. 12. [As to] My people, its exactors [are]—a vexing one:  
And creditors have ruled it.

My people, thy directors [are] misleaders;  
And they have devoured the way of thy paths.

13. Jehovah [is] set to plead,  
And standing to judge peoples.

14. Jehovah will come into [just] judgment  
With the elders of His people and its princes.

And you—you have devoured the vineyard:  
The plunder of the poor is in your houses.

15. What [reason] have you [that] you crush My people;  
And [that] you grind the faces of the poor?

In the fifth strophe, the prophet turns to the luxury and vanity of the women in Jerusalem. For three short years, there was little to sober the idle ladies of the royal city. In 738, a cloud of Assyrian soldiery had swept down upon a confederacy of nineteen States in Northern Syria; and, in the fashion Tiglath-pileser III had inaugurated two years earlier, many of the conquered people were transported. Even Menahem of Israel paid tribute to insure himself against attack. In the following year, 737, the Assyrian king was battling successfully with the Medes; and this expedition was followed by others in 736 and 735 against Armenia. Those three years were a breathing-time for Judah. Jotham was still very prosperous, 2 *Chronicles* xxvii. He defeated the Ammonites, and exacted an annual tribute from them. He constructed the upper or northern gate of the Temple, and



built largely on Ophel, the southern part of the Temple Mount. Both undertakings, like the fortresses and hill cities he established throughout his little kingdom, provided against an enemy; and they served to encourage the confidence and levity of the frivolous classes. Therefore the prophet turns towards the rich and idle women, saying,

[It is] decreed of the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts,  
iii. 16. And Jehovah said:

Because the daughters of Zion have been haughty,  
And have gone with outstretched throat and winking  
eyes.

To walk and trip, they go,  
And jingle with their feet.

17. And the Lord will scabify the poll of the daughters of  
Zion ;  
And the Lord will lay bare their forehead.

This last word occurs here only. The Syriac translator simply Syricised the Greek translation, which rendered the Hebrew word as "schism" or "division," probably with reference to the hair. The word is parallel to that translated "poll" in the previous line, and derived from the root "to cleave," probably again because of the natural parting in the hair. Condamin is therefore possibly right in translating the word as "forehead," so that the sentence describes the removal of the veil or the shaving of the brow.

Then the prophet catalogues the condemned ornaments.

iii. 18. In that Day, the Lord will remove the ornament  
Of the jingles and the little suns and the little moons,  
19. The ear-drops and the bracelets and the veils,  
20. The tiaras and the step-chains and the sashes,

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- And the boxes of perfume and the charms,  
21. The seals and the rings for the nose,  
22. The holiday-clothes and the overalls  
And the shawls and the pouches.

The first word of the next couplet is generally rendered "mirrors"; but the prophet is here speaking of garments; so it may be better to point the word differently, as *g'linîm* instead of *gilyônîm*, and following the Greek Vulgate, Kimchi, and the analogy of the Babylonian word *gulînu*, to render it "transparent vests" or "gauzes." The "little moons," like those mentioned in *Judges* viii. 26, and the golden crescents found in the Israelite stratum at Taanach, were amulets against the evil eye. He concludes his enumeration with

- iii. 23. The gauzes and the linens  
And the turbans and the mantillas.

In the sixth strophe, he pictures the desolation to follow. Instead of scents, there will be the stink of putrid ulcers.

- iii. 24. And it shall be [that] instead of balsam [perfume],  
[There] shall be rot.

And instead of a girdle, a rope;  
And instead of curled work, baldness.

And instead of a mantle, the girding with sackcloth;  
A brand instead of beauty.

25. Thy males shall fall by the sword,  
And thy heroism in the battle.

Not only so, but the judges and elders shall be taken away.

- iii. 26. And her gates shall groan and mourn;  
And emptied, she shall sit on the ground.

The conclusion of this, the sixth strophe, is found in the opening verse of c. iv.



## CHAPTER IV

HERE the prophet pictures the loss of men and the consequent desolation of the idle women, who must eat their own bread—that is, earn their own living.

iv. 1. And seven women shall seize one man  
In that Day, saying :

2. We shall eat our own bread,  
And we shall clothe us in our own garments.

Only, thy name will be called upon us—  
Take away our reproach.

Then the prophet adds a seventh strophe, for it is Isaiah's wont to complete a picture of judgment with a prophecy of redemption. He states his characteristic doctrine that a Remnant of Judah shall be saved. And in speaking of those "written for life," that is "registered as destined to attain eternal life," he refers to the prayer of Moses, *Exodus* xxxii. 32, regarding the Book God had written. It will also be noted that the prophecy speaks in the same way as to the Shoot of Jehovah and the fruit of the earth, not that these are merely synonymous, but are found in fuller light to indicate One of divine and human origin. Says the prophet :

iv. 2. In that Day, there will be the Shoot of Jehovah  
For splendour and for glory.

And the fruit of the earth [will be] for sublimity and for  
ornament

For the escaped of Israel.

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3. And there will be the Remnant in Zion,  
And the Residue in Jerusalem.

It will be said of him, "[He is] holy,"  
[That is, of] everyone who is written for life in Jerusalem ;

4. When the Lord has washed the filth of the daughters of  
Zion ;  
And He will cast out the blood of Jerusalem from its  
midst

With the spirit of [just] judgment  
And with the spirit of devouring.

In the next line we do not follow the Greek Vulgate in reading "come" for "create"; nor in the second, do we, in accordance with some fifty Hebrew manuscripts, read "convocation" in the plural. In these next lines, Isaiah refers to the pillar of fire and cloud, *Exodus* xiii. 21, that accompanied Israel from Egypt just six centuries before Isaiah wrote these words, if we may, as is probable according to Pinches' *Old Testament*, p. 307, date the Exodus in 1335 B.C.

- iv. 5. And Jehovah will create  
Upon every establishment of Mount Zion and upon its  
convocation

A cloud by day and a smoke  
And the shining of the fire of a flame by night.

For upon every glory [will be] a canopy,

6. And a hut will be for a shadow by day from heat,  
And for a refuge and for a concealment  
From storm and from rain.

The last four lines, as Knabenbauer points out, announce that in the Day of Deliverance, everything that speaks of the Divine Presence will be protected; and though the Divine Kingdom appear as lowly as a hut or booth, it will be a sufficient fortress against every enemy.

## CHAPTER V

IN 735, the three years' peace for Judah was ended by the death of Pekahiah, son of Menahem. He had, in 736, obtained the throne of Samaria and Northern Israel, and would have allowed his kingdom to remain in vassalage, had he not been murdered by Pekah ben-Remaliah, who joined Rezin of Damascus, the Tyrians, and the Philistines in a revolt against Assyria. When Jotham refused to join the enterprise, the conspirators attacked Judah. It was apparently on the eve of the invasion, Isaiah uttered the Parable of the Vineyard. It is suggested by Skinner that the comparison of Israel to a vineyard may have originated with Isaiah. Already, as we have noted, iii. 14, he has charged the Judean rulers with consuming the vineyard. The fuller implication of the comparison will be told in our Lord's parables of the Labourers, *Matthew* xx. 1, the Two Sons, *Matthew* xxi. 28, and the Wicked Husbandmen, *Matthew* xxi. 33.

First, the prophet announces his subject :

- v. 1. Let me sing, pray, about my Beloved  
A song of my Love about His Vineyard.

The measure is light and popular to attract the crowd. As yet the prophet must not tell them the Beloved and the Vineyard are Jehovah and Israel. So the first strophe simply relates the parable.

My Beloved had a Vineyard  
On a hill, very fertile.

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Literally, the line reads "on a horn, the son of fatness."

- v. 2. And He digged it, and stoned it,  
And planted a rich vine.

The stoning, of course, refers to the removal of stones ; and the rich vine, literally "a Soreq," is that producing a dark grape, the best in Syria.

And He built a tower in its midst ;  
And He also hewed out a vat in it.

The tower was for protection. The vat was to receive the juice from the wine-press above it.

And He expected [it] to make grapes ;  
And it made foetid things.

The second strophe contains the Song of the Loved One about the Vineyard. It is really the voice of Jehovah to Israel. So the third person changes to the first.

- v. 3. And now, dweller of Jerusalem and man of Judah,  
Judge you, pray, between Me and My Vineyard.
4. What was [there] yet [for Me] to do to My Vineyard,  
And I have not done [it] in it ?

Why did I expect [it] to make grapes ?  
And [yet] it made foetid things.

The third strophe begins as the second with the word for "and now." It announces what judgment will follow the infidelity, described in parable by the first strophe and in legal indictment by the second.

- v. 5. And now, let me make known to you, pray,  
What I [am] doing to My Vineyard.

[I am working] to remove its [thorn] hedge ;  
And it will be to be devoured—



To burst its [stone] fence ;  
 And it will be to be trampled ;  
 6. And I shall set it [as] a waste.

It will not be pruned, nor hoed ;  
 And brier and bramble will ascend.

And I shall command the clouds  
 Not to rain rain upon it.

In "brier and bramble," we have an alliteration corresponding to the Hebrew phrase, which is peculiar to Isaiah. In the next and fourth strophe, which carries the moral and explains the parable, we have Hebrew assonances in "[just] judgment" and "bloodshed," and in "justice" and "cry." To represent these, Box suggests "measures" and "massacres," "right" and "riot."

The prophet concludes his song :—

v. 7. For the Vineyard of Jehovah of Hosts is the House of  
 Israel ;

And the men of Judah the plant of His delights.

That is, they are the plant, in which He took great delight.

And He expected [just] judgment ;  
 And behold, bloodshed.

[He expected] justice ;  
 And behold, a cry.

The conclusion of this little volume, the "Book of the Vineyard," cc. ii.—v., is formed by a song of woes. The Syrian Rezin of Damascus and the Israelite or Ephraimite Pekah of Samaria were troubling the last days of Jotham, that they might compel him to join their confederacy against Assyria, for Jerusalem was too strong a fortress to be allowed independent play in any war involving Assyria, Syria, and Egypt. If the confederates might hope for any help from Egypt, then divided among petty princes and preyed on by the Ethiopians, it would

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be necessary to free the line of march from all danger in the direction of the Judean capital. In spite of the prophet's menace, the ruling classes of Judah were lost to all sense of justice and honour. In punishment, Rezin of Damascus and Pekah of Samaria would descend upon Judah; and a more terrible doom was to be wrought by the Assyrians, indicated as the nations from afar.

The first woe is directed against those who are dispossessing the small farmers and householders, reducing these to vassals or hirelings.

The first line states the theme :

v. 8. Woe ! Those joining house to house !

Then the result is foretold :

They will bring field to field unto the end of place ;  
And you will be made to dwell alone amid the land.

It is to be noted how the person changes, the prophet turning in the midst of his speech to address himself directly to those who were uniting estates till no place would be left for others. Now the prophet prepares to announce the judgment. It is God's own word.

v. 9. In my ears [is revealed] Jehovah of Hosts.

In this line, which stands as a title, it is clear some word is understood. The Greek Vulgate reads "it is heard of," translating the Hebrew word like that for "it is sworn by," and possibly misread for it. The Latin Vulgate reads "says." But the phrase is similar to that in xxii. 14, where the full form reads "is revealed"; and it is better for us perhaps to follow the analogy of that passage.

Then God announces desolation and barrenness.

Assuredly many houses will become a desolation ;  
Great and good [houses will become] so that there is not  
a dweller.



- v. 10. For ten yokes of vineyard will make one bath ;  
And the seed of a homer will make an ephah.

A vineyard of about five acres, or ten times as large as what one yoke of oxen was expected to plough in a day, will produce one bath of wine, a liquid measure equal in dry measure to an ephah or the tenth of a homer, that is, 65 pints. And the seed, contained in a homer measure of 650 pints, will produce an ephah or 65 pints of grain. We have rendered the Hebrew for "if not" by "assuredly," as the two particles are used to introduce an oath, there being an ellipsis of some such phrase as "May God ruin me" at the beginning of the sentence, of which the full form would run, "May God ruin me, if many houses will not become a desolation."

The second woe is directed against the banqueters, drunken and senseless, who rise early and sit late to drink intoxicating liquors.

- v. 11. Woe! Those rising early in the morning—  
They will pursue intoxicant.

Those tarrying in the twilight—  
Wine will inflame them.

12. And harp and lyre,  
Timbrel and flute  
And wine will be their banquets.

And they did not look at the work of Jehovah ;  
And they did not see the deed of His hands.

So Isaiah, speaking in the prophetic past tense to indicate the sureness and completeness of the vengeance, announces the Exile of the Judeans.

- v. 13. Therefore my people are exiled  
From defect of knowledge.

Some translate this last line as "without knowledge" or "unawares"; but this is to overlook the undoubted meaning of the phrase in *Hosea* iv. 6.

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Now the prophet gives us a glimpse of hungry princes, the "glory" of the people, and a thirsty multitude, such as the inhabitants of Jerusalem would be during a siege. Still speaking of the people, he says :

And its glory [is] hungry males ;  
And its multitude is dry with thirst.

In the phrase, "hungry males," literally "males of hunger," we retain the ordinary Hebrew text, as it is abundantly supported, and Isaiah has already, iii. 25, used the word "males"; though, on the other hand, the Greek Vulgate here points the word so that it means "dying men"; and some moderns adopt another reading, "consumed," that is, "consumed with hunger," from *Deuteronomy* xxxii. 24.

But deeper than Jerusalem we must look, and see Sheol, the Underworld of the Dead, pictured as a woman, enlarging her body and gaping to swallow all of Zion.

v. 14. Therefore Sheol has widened herself,  
And distended her mouth without limit.

In accordance with the sense, we employ the word "herself" to translate the Hebrew for "her soul." In the next couplet, the pronouns refer to Jerusalem,

And there descended her splendour and her multitude  
And her uproar and he exultant in her.

Then Isaiah recalled the refrain of the song, ii. 5-22, he had written on Micah's text to begin both this Book of the Vineyard and his ministry under Jotham. So he emphasised the burden of his prophecies during that reign.

v. 15. And one will be bowed ;  
And a man will be humbled ;  
And the eyes of the high ones will be humbled.

16. And Jehovah of Hosts will be high in the judgment ;  
And God, the Holy One, is hallowed in justice.

17. And lambs shall feed [on it] as their pasture-ground ;  
And kids shall eat the wastes of the fat ones.

In the first line of the last couplet, we decline to abandon the Hebrew text for a very modern conjecture, which would substitute "in their prairie." In the second line, both the Greek Vulgate and the parallelism with "lambs" show us that we should read "kids" for "strangers" or "sojourners," the Hebrew scribes apparently having omitted the tittle which distinguishes the *d* from an *r*. The couplet therefore tells of Judah so devastated that the land had become cattle runs, and the houses of the wealthy merely dry places where young goats might seek food.

The third woe is against the unbelieving.

v. 18. Woe ! Those drawing iniquity with cords of vanity  
And [drawing] sin as [with] the ropes of a cart.

Light are the means these fools first of all employ to attract moral evil to themselves, but soon they are woven by habit into a rope.

v. 19. Who say, He will hasten—  
Let Him speed His work that we may see.

The upright stroke or *pesiq* in the Hebrew text at the end of the first line shows a small break, such as we should expect, if the scorers were about to repeat one of Isaiah's sentences, "He will hasten His work," but changed the construction in the midst of the sentence. We explain "speed" as transitive, in accordance with lx. 22, where it is said, "He will speed it in His time." The scorers now, it will be noted, take up another of Isaiah's phrases,

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“the counsel of the Holy One of Israel,” to mock it.  
They say.

And it will approach, and let it come—  
The counsel of the Holy One of Israel—and let us know.

The fourth woe is directed against those who subvert the divine standards of goodness, truth and pleasure.

- v. 20. Woe ! Those saying to the evil, [thou art] good ;  
And to the good, [thou art] evil.  
Putting darkness for light,  
And light for darkness.  
Putting bitter for sweet,  
And sweet for bitter.

The fifth woe denounces the politicians, whose wisdom was planning alliance with Egypt or submission to Assyria.

- v. 21. Woe ! Wise in their own eyes  
And intelligent before their own faces !

The sixth and last woe refers to judges, drunken and unjust. In this case, as in those of the banqueters and covetous, vv. 12 and 14, the prophet enlarges the denunciation.

- v. 22. Woe ! Heroes to drink wine  
And men of might to mix intoxicant !  
23. Justifying a wicked man in reward of a bribe ;  
And they will remove the justice of just men from each.

In the last word, the third personal pronoun is used distributively to represent “each,” as in *Hosea* iv. 8. These judges mixed strong liquors with spices, till their blood was inflamed, and their conscience was blinded. In the next couplet, we render the phrase “hay of flame” as “burning hay.”

- v. 24. Therefore as the tongue of fire eats straw,  
And burning hay will collapse ;



Their root will become like the rot ;  
And their bud will ascend like the [small] dust.

That is to say, their root will become like putrid wood. Utterly diseased and childless, they will be like a plant that has neither "root below nor fruit above," according to the expression engraved about 270 B.C. on the sarcophagus of Eshmunazar, king of Sidon, *lines* 11 and 12 :

Because they spurned the law of Jehovah of Hosts,  
And they scorned the saying of the Holy One of Israel.

Now the prophet, beginning his announcement of judgment in his characteristic way, with the word "therefore," composes a conclusion to his Song of Woes, and looks upon the whole people instead of regarding special classes. He foresees the coming of Rezin from Damascus and Pekah from Samaria against Jotham, for "in those days," as we read in 2 *Kings* xv. 37, "Jehovah began to send Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah against Judah." But this utterance by Isaiah is prophetic, like the others, also preceded by "therefore," in vv. 13, 14, and 24 ; so that the trembling of the hills does not refer to the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, but to the immediate future in that very year, 735, the last of Jotham's reign, when nature would seem agitated and the bodies of the slain would lie unburied.

v. 25. Therefore the wrath of Jehovah is kindled against His people ;

And He has extended His hand over it, and struck it.

And the hills trembled ;

And their corpse [that is, the bodies of the slain] became  
as the sweeping amid streets.

Still that would not be sufficient. Judah would be sifted by a double judgment. This the prophet declares



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in a couplet, which he will employ later as a refrain, cc. ix. 11, ix. 16, ix. 20, and x. 4, in the Hebrew text.

In [spite of] all this His wrath returned not ;  
And still His hand is outstretched.

That is, His wrath has not ceased.

Then the prophet tells how that continued stretching forth of the hand to strike implies the coming of the Assyrians.

v. 26. And He will lift a standard to the nations from afar ;  
And whistle for him from the end of the earth.

And behold a hastening :  
Light will he come.

27. None is wearied ;  
And none is stumbling with him.

He will not slumber ;  
And he will not sleep.

And the belt of his loins is not opened ;  
And the strap of his sandals is not torn away.

28. Whose arrows [are] sharpened,  
And all his bows trodden.

This last word means “bent by the foot,” that is, each bow, so large that it was bent by putting the foot on it, was ready to deliver its arrow. Strong too were the hoofs of his horses, and had need to be over the hills of Judea, for there were no horse-shoes in those days.

The hoofs of his horses are estimated as the flint,  
And his wheels as the whirlwind.

v. 29. His roaring is like the lioness ;  
And he will roar like the young lions, and he will growl.

And he will seize prey, and secure [it] ;  
And none is delivering [it].

30. And he will growl over it in that day,  
Like the growling of the sea.

And he will look at the earth ;  
And behold the darkness of distress ;  
And light is darkened in its clouds.

The words for “flint” and “distress” are the same ; and it is to be noted how the prophet insists on the roaring and growling to intensify the horror. In translating the last couplet, we follow St. Jerome and many moderns in placing the disjunctive accent on “distress,” connecting that word with the preceding “darkness,” instead of following Delitzsch in reading “distress and light” as an interjectional clause, and instead of regarding the word, we have rendered “distress,” as a contracted form of *zohar*, “shining,” and making it, with “light,” the subject of the singular verb “is darkened.” The last word of all, that translated “clouds,” occurs in this place only. It is not derived from *‘ārāph*, “to destroy,” as held by Kimchi, who argued from *Hosea* x. 2, and explained the noun as “ruins” ; but it is from *‘ārāph*, “to drip,” used of learning in *Deuteronomy* xxxii. 2, and of dew from the heavens in *Deuteronomy* xxxiii. 28. The noun then is referred to that which drips rain, that is, to the heavens, or preferably to the clouds, as the Syriac Vulgate renders the word “obscurity,” the Latin Vulgate “darkness,” and the Greek Vulgate metaphorically “perplexity.” The word corresponds to the Greek *orphnē*, “darkness” ; and there is no need to adopt Houbigant’s conjecture, *‘ārāphēl*, “a dark cloud.”

## CHAPTER VI

IN 735, Jotham died, and was succeeded by his son Jo-achaz or Jeho-achaz, that is, "Jehovah has seized." The Assyrian inscriptions, in giving his name as Ia-u-cha-zi, show it contained the Sacred Name as an element; but apparently his apostasy led prophet and historian to deprive his name of the prefix; and he is known as Achaz or Ahaz. During his reign, Isaiah wrote his "Book of Emmanuel," cc. vii.-xii., with the vision in c. vi. as a preface.

At the accession of Ahaz, a coward in heart and a pagan in sympathy, passed away any influence possessed by Isaiah. To assert the divine origin of his vocation, the prophet now, at the commencement of the new reign, tells of his call in 740, five years earlier, just before the commencement of the last reign. He was then probably about twenty-five years of age; and apparently he had recently married, for in 735 his elder boy could accompany him on his visit to the king. And according to the Massoretic text of 2 *Kings* xx. 4, he lived in the middle or lower city.

One day, he entered the Temple gate; and standing in the outer court, walled by three layers of hewn stone and a row of cedar planks, he looked from the store-houses and official dwellings around him westwards towards the inner court, where the great bronze altar for burnt-offerings, thirty feet wide by fifteen feet high, stood above the great limestone rock, fifty feet wide and rising

about five feet above the pavement as the literal "stone of trial," that is, tried stone, "corner-stone, precious, foundation founded," xxviii. 16. Hard by were two fountains; and on each side of the altar stood ten basins on wheeled stands to carry water for washing the sacrifices. A little beyond the altar and a little to the south, on Isaiah's left, was the Molten or Bronze Sea, seven feet and a half high and fifteen feet wide. Its rim was bent outward in lily fashion; and itself bulged out in the lower part, so it could contain two thousand Hebrew baths or 73,840 litres or 65,000 English quarts. This vessel, for the bathing of the priests, 2 *Chronicles* iv. 6, stood upon twelve bronze oxen, divided into four groups, one of which faced the east and Isaiah, the others looking respectively towards the other points of the compass. Soon Ahaz, 2 *Kings* xvi. 17, will remove the oxen elsewhere, and place the vessel on a stone pavement; and at a still later day, in 586, the soldiers of Nebuchadrezzar, *Jeremiah* lii. 17, 20, will break the vessel and carry the fragments and the bronze oxen to Babylon.

Under the clear sky, Isaiah looked up and saw the white limestone of the Temple, the huge blocks having been prepared in the quarries under the city, where still remain great stones and the red marks of the Phœnician masons. In front of the building rose two pillars. That on the north side towards Isaiah's right was named Boaz, that is, "in Him is strength," or as some with greater show of reason derive the word, "swiftness." The other was known as Jachin, "He will establish." Each, hollow and of bronze, was nearly six feet in diameter and twenty-four feet in height, to which seven and a half feet must be added for a lily-shaped chapter with network, pomegranates and chains. Such pillars are found in the temple of Amon in Egypt, and stood before the



temple of Melkarth or Milk-qarth, "king of the city," in Tyre. There these menhirs or pillars, which originally were altars, stood as memorials of pagans. Raised before the Temple of Jehovah by Hiram the decorator, they became symbolical of other ideas, representing indeed what Isaiah stood for in that time of national indifference and foreign alliances. For the one spoke of God's speedy judgment; and the other taught it was He alone would save His people. So they stood till their warning was exhausted, and till they and the people were broken and carried to Babylon, *Jeremiah* lii. 17.

Between the pillars, stone stairs approached the covered porch, that rose in the form of a tower, thirty feet wide like the Temple itself, and apparently, if we may correct the Massoretic text by some manuscripts and the Greek Vulgate, thirty feet high. The flat roof of the Temple rose fifteen feet higher still, 1 *Kings* vi. 2. In the porch was a double door of juniper wood, each leaf again double and folding on itself. In Solomon's time, they were overlaid with gold, 1 *Kings* vi. 36; but it is not likely that any of the metal survived the ravages of Sheshonq I, or Shishak, the Libyan king of Egypt, when he defeated Rehoboam and despoiled the Temple about 926 B.C., 1 *Kings* xiv. 25. Indeed, about fifty years before Isaiah's vision, Jehoash of Israel had defeated Amaziah of Judah, and "took all the gold and the silver and all the vessels" in the Temple, 2 *Kings* xiv. 14. Whether Uzziah, or Azariah, during his long and prosperous reign of fifty years from that sack of the Temple to Isaiah's vision, replated the doors, we cannot tell. He must have restored the incense altar, for he himself desired to officiate at it, 2 *Chronicles* xxvi. 16; and he must have replaced much of the gold and silver, for his son "Ahaz took the silver and the gold that was found in the house



of Jehovah," and sent it with other wealth as a bribe to the king of Assyria, *2 Kings* xvi. 8.

To the prophet's eye, the door opened; and within the Holy Place, he saw the golden altar of incense. Towards the south or left side was the golden table with the twelve loaves of shewbread, and on each side five golden candlesticks, each seven-branched and standing on a table, and one of them being alight. Beyond the altar, hung the veil that typified the Divine Humanity, rent at the Crucifixion, *Matthew* xxvii. 51, *Hebrews* x. 20. This curtain was woven of blue, purple, crimson and fine linen, and was inwrought with figures of cherubs, *2 Chronicles* iii. 14. This seemed to pass from Isaiah's view; and the double door of olive-wood with its double leaves fell back.

There stood revealed the Most Holy Place, entered on one day only in the year, and only by the High Priest, in fulfilment of the ritual for the Day of Atonement. Then the High Priest, having filled the Most Holy Place with clouds of incense, sprinkled sacrificial blood for priests and people on the altar, that was formed by the cover of the ark.

As to the ark itself, in Solomon's time, it contained only the Tablets of Sinai, *1 Kings* viii. 9. In form, it was an oblong chest of acacia wood, nearly four feet long and a little more than two feet in breadth and height. Overlaid with gold within and without, it was also covered by an altar-slab or mercyseat of pure gold, *Exodus* xxv. 10, 17. As originally made at the foot of Sinai, it carried two cherubs, turned towards each other and looking upon the mercyseat. In Solomon's Temple, the cherubs stood upon their feet and faced the entrance, *2 Chronicles* iii. 13. Their wings were seven feet and a half in length, and arranged in a line so that they just

reached from wall to wall, thirty feet, the right wing of the one cherub and the left of the other forming a canopy over the ark. Each was fifteen feet high, made of olive wood and overlaid with gold. As to their forms, Josephus, *Antiquities*, VIII, said no one could tell or represent what they were like. The *Book of Kings*, I, vii. 29, distinguishes them from lions and oxen; and *Ezekiel*, x. 14, distinguishes their faces from those of men, lions, and eagles. Therefore we cannot follow the younger Delitzsch, who identifies them, *Babel and Bible*, p. 64, with the Babylonian and Assyrian figures of winged bulls with human heads. Such forms symbolised a union of qualities—swiftness, for example, with strength and intelligence. Now it has been suggested that the name in Babylonian and Hebrew is connected with the root, *qarabh*, “approach.” Thus it means an attendant, as originally in Assyrian and Babylonian, where it came to signify an angel or spirit. And as an angel, it might be represented by different material forms, according to the quality regarded as prominent. As angels, their office of guarding Eden with “the flame of the revolving sword,” *Genesis* iii. 24, and the mention of a cherub as that on which Jehovah rode in a theophany of judicial thunderstorm, 2 *Samuel* xxii. 11, imply that they were ministers of judgment.

Whatever may have been the fate of the cherubs, the ark at least was saved from the soldiers of Shishak and Jehoash. At the close of Isaiah’s ministry, it will be removed by Manasseh to make room for his image of Astarte, 2 *Chronicles* xxxiii. 7. Restored by Josiah, 2 *Chronicles* xxxv. 3, it will again and at once be held the great pledge of divine protection, *Jeremiah* iii. 16, until Nebuchadrezzar’s destruction of the Temple, when it will be hidden by Jeremiah in Pisgah, according to

the Jewish account in 2 *Maccabees* ii. 5. At the time of Isaiah's vision, the ark was therefore in the Most Holy Place, but whether it was then overshadowed by cherubs, we cannot say. When the prophet sees Jehovah enthroned, the attendant ministers are not two-winged cherubs but six-winged seraphs, of whom we read in this place alone.

A wealth of learning has been squandered in building strange theories about the meaning and origin of the word "seraph," and its plural "seraphim" or "seraphs." It has been connected with the Aryan root of "serpent," with the Arabic *sharif*, "noble," with the fiery serpents of the wilderness, *Numbers* xxi. 6, and *Deuteronomy* viii. 15, and with the flying fiery serpents of *Isaiah* xiv. 29 and xxx. 6. In the case of the wilderness serpents, "seraphim" is merely an adjective to signify "burning" or "fiery," probably because the bite produced burning fever. The "flying fiery [serpent]" of *Isaiah* xiv. 29 and xxx. 6 is used in poetic imagery to indicate a reptile like the seref or winged griffin of Egypt. From such facts, we cannot deduce an identity between serpents and the seraphim or "consuming ones" of Isaiah's vision. These some writers, and not unreasonably, have represented as the angels of love, for it is the love of God that inspires even His judgments upon His people, and consumes all that selfishness and hatred construct against Him, Who is Love Itself.

Such were the circumstances of the vision, which the prophet now describes.

vi. 1. In the year of the death of the King Uzziah,  
And I saw the Lord,

Sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,  
And his skirts [were] filling the temple.



In the ancient way, Isaiah dates his vision by a special event. The Lord is enthroned in the shrine, *naös*, *debâr*, or Most Holy Place, apparently on the Mercyseat; but His skirts, the trailing folds of His robe, flow out into the Holy Place, technically known as the *heykál*, that is, the hall or temple.

There is some significance in the dating of the vision by the death of King Uzziah, or Azariah, who had been smitten with leprosy because of his entering the Holy Place to perform the priestly act of burning incense at the altar there. Whether the day of the vision was also the Day of Atonement does not appear, though some have found a suggestion of it in the word "purged" or "expiated," used by the seraph in v. 7, and closely connected with the last word in the phrase, "the Day of Atonement" or "expiations," *Leviticus* xxiii. 27.

vi. 2. Seraphs standing over Him—

Six wings in pairs to each one.

With two he covers his face ;

And with two he covers his feet ;

And with two he flies.

The position of the seraphim is that of ministers and attendants; and the covering of face and feet lest they see or be seen is an expression of utter reverence. We translate the word "wings" as "wings in pairs," because it is in the dual form. As the seraphs are standing and yet flying, we can describe them in one word as hovering. Though nothing is said as to their number, Origen held there were two; and this would seem to be implied in the next sentence.

vi. 3. And this called to that ;

And he said—

Holy, holy, holy [is] Jehovah of hosts :

The fulness of all the earth is His glory.

That is, the earth is filled with the external glory or manifestation of Him Who is internally and essentially holy. This theme is sustained throughout the whole volume of Isaiah; and in the last twenty-seven chapters, there is special emphasis on the manifestation of God's glory in the world and nature.

Then the prophet sees the house or whole building filled with smoke; and the steps of the porch are shaken.

vi. 4. And the bases of the thresholds were staggered, because  
of the voice of the [one] crying;  
And the house is being filled with smoke.

5. And I said, Woe to me! For I am ended;  
For a man unclean of lips [am] I.

And I [am] dwelling amid a people unclean of lips;  
For my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of Hosts.

6. And one of the seraphs flew to me,  
And a hot stone in his hand.

He took [it] with tongs from off the altar,

7. And he caused [it] to touch my mouth.

And he said, Behold!  
This has touched thy lips.

And thy iniquity has departed;  
And thy sin is expiated.

The Greek Vulgate and the Rabbis explain the hot stone as coal, but Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus, and St. Jerome render it as a stone, such as was used to bake meal or roast meat or transfer heat from the hearth to another place. In the present case, it had been heated on the altar of burnt-offering in the court, and placed on the altar in the Holy Place to kindle the incense, as glowing charcoal does in a thurible. Further, it confirms what we have said regarding the respective offices of the seraph and the cherub, that the seraph here performs a



work of Divine love and mercy, and "the coals of fire" in the hand of the cherub, *Ezekiel* x. 7, were for Divine judgment and destruction.

The next four lines form a quatrain in which the first and fourth are parallel, the one introducing the Voice of the Lord, and the other announcing the voice of the prophet. In the second and third, we have an antithesis of God's election and man's choice.

vi. 8. And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying,  
       Whom shall I send?  
       And who will go for us?  
       And I said, Behold me : send me.

Here are the two elements in all human administration of Divine things, God's power and our freewill, so that even the Sacraments, as well as the Sacrifice of the Mass require so much intention on the part of the priest as will constitute the act a human and rational one, for which the agent is responsible. Isaiah's answer is unlike that of Moses, so distrustful of his own power, *Exodus* iv. 10, and that of Jeremiah, timid and sensitive to a degree, *Jeremiah* i. 6. On the contrary, it is swift as St. Paul's, *Acts* xxvi. 19, in acceptance of the Divine Commission. Then God spoke again through His theophany, a created manifestation of Himself.

vi. 9. And He said, Go ;  
       And thou wilt say to this people :  
       Continue to hear, and do not understand ;  
       And continue to see, and do not know.

In each line of the second couplet, the prophet uses an imperative followed by an absolute infinitive, "hear to hear" and "see to see" to express continuance of the action, as if he had said, "continue to hear," "continue to see." The grace will still be offered, but since it has

already been rejected, it will now be to the hardening and greater condemnation of him to whom it is offered. To this end the Voice directs the prophet.

- vi. 10. Fatten the heart of this people ;  
 And make its ears heavy ;  
 And besmear its eyes.  
 Lest it see with its eyes,  
 And hear with its ears,  
 And [lest] its heart understand,  
 And it return and He heal it.

The verb "heal" is accented on the penultimate syllable because it precedes a monosyllable. The whole of the last line may be rendered "and again He heal it." But the name already given to Isaiah's elder son, Shear-yashûb, that is, "a remnant will return," and the prophet's emphasis on a return, as well as the Greek Vulgate and the New Testament quotations in *Matthew* xiii. 15, *John* xii. 40, and *Acts* xxviii. 27, make our version more probable. As yet the return is indefinite, but it will grow gradually clearer that the word implies both the return to the Lord and the consequent return to the land. Further, we are justified in translating the Hebrew verb as "He may heal," and not only impersonally as in *Mark* iv. 12, both on account of the Hebrew form, and because the Greek Vulgate and the other New Testament passages refer it directly to God, rendering it, "I shall heal them." It is a sad commission, to be an incense fragrance rising out of death, the condemnation, and reaching unto death, the execution, *2 Corinthians* c. v. 16. Therefore the prophet speaks again:—

- vi. 11. And I said, Until when, Lord ?  
 And He said, Until that [time], when they have wasted  
 Cities, so that there is not a dweller,  
 And houses, so that there is not anyone.

- And the ground will be wasted [as] a desolation ;  
 12. And Jehovah will put far everyone ;  
 And the forsaken [region] will be great amid the land.

It is to be noted that "anyone" is used to translate *'ādām*, the generic word for "man"; and that "everyone" represents the same word with the article. The word is similar to that for "ground" or "tilled ground," *ādāmáh*. As to the line in which this occurs, we can translate it more simply if we follow the Greek and Latin Vulgates in reading "left" for "wasted," assuming that the letter *r* has been changed into *h* by the copyists. Then the line says the tilled ground will be left a desolation. Further, though the word for "great" is accented on the last syllable, we regard it as a verb "will be great," and not as an adjective "great," because it, like the word for "will put far," has the prefix "and," which moves the tone forward when it is "*waw* conversive of the preterite," indicating a future reference for the past tense.

As the prophet had said of Judah in the Parable of the Vineyard, v. 5, that it will be to be consumed, so he has just taught in recording his call. But this is not all. A tenth may survive in Judah; as Amos, about 760 B.C., or twenty years before this vision, had said v. 3, of the ten northern tribes that the city which issued [as] a thousand should leave a hundred, and that which issued [as] a hundred should leave ten to the house of Israel. But even that tenth must undergo further judgment, like the stock that has survived its tree only to be cast into the fire. So the tenth "will return and will be to be consumed," or as we may also render the words, the tenth "will again be to be consumed." During the Babylonian Captivity, the same theme will be illustrated in *Ezekiel* v. 1, by the preserving a few hairs from a shorn beard and the flinging some of these into a flame.

And after the Captivity, Zechariah will show the same principle at work by his announcement that two parts of the people will be cut off and expire, and the third be treated like silver and gold in the fire.

Were this all, Isaiah's prophecy would be one of unrelieved gloom, contrary to the style of the evangelical prophet. It is true the Greek Vulgate omits the last words, "a holy seed [is] its stock"; but these are found in Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus, as well as in the Hebrew text of Origen's time. But we are entitled to correct our printed Massoretic text by about one hundred Hebrew manuscripts and the Hebrew text underlying the Greek and Latin Vulgates. Therefore we read "a stock in it," instead of "a stock in them"; and we render the whole verse:

vi. 13. And [let there be] still a tenth in it;  
And it will return, and will be to be devoured.

Like the terebinth and like the oak  
Which [is] in felling.

That is, which is being felled.

A stock [is] in it:  
A holy seed [is] its stock.



## CHAPTER VII

IN the first year of Ahaz, 735, Syria and Israel united to take Jerusalem and establish there a Syrian dynasty likely to join their confederation against Assyria. Isaiah, sent to encourage the king against his enemies, delivers the prophecy, from which we name the prophecies, vii.-xii., delivered during the reign of Ahaz, "the Book of Immanuel."

With the accession of Ahaz, a boy indeed came to reign over Judah. It was the signal for open apostasy. He cast images of Baal; and in the ravine named after Ben-Hinnom—rather that beneath the western and southern walls than the Kidron—he revived the worship of Molech, that is, the idol of the Ammonites, whose capital city Rabbah in David's time possessed a statue so large that the golden and jewelled crown weighed a talent, or about 108 pounds avoirdupois. The name of the idol was really Melekh, "king," but pointed with the vowels of *bosheth*, "shame." Now the fact that the sacrifices of children at Tophet in Gehinnom or the Valley of Hinnom, that is, possibly in the open space where the ravine of Hinnom joins that of the Kidron, were also said to be offered to Baal, *Jeremiah* xix. 5, shows a connection between the Ammonite cult of Molech or Melekh and the Phœnician cult of Milk-qarth, "King of the city," the Baal of Tyre. According to Diodorus Siculus, xx. 14, children were placed in the hands of the huge idol at Phœnician Carthage, so that they rolled



off into a furnace. In such rites Ahaz participated, though Micah, vi. 7, rose to voice Jehovah's controversy and show the perversity of such sacrifices, asking

Shall I give my firstborn [for] my transgression,  
The fruit of my body [for] the sin of my soul?

Hardly had the revel of idolatry begun, when the Syrians and the Israelites marched against Jerusalem. Rezin of Syria marched through Edom to the Gulf, and having taken Elath from the Jews, sent many captives to Damascus and restored the port to Edom, according to the corrected text of 2 *Kings* xvi. 6, where Aram had been substituted for Edom by changing a *d* into *r* under the influence of the word "Aram" in the title, "King of Aram," found in the immediate context. While Rezin was victorious in the south-east, Pekah of Israel fought an open battle with Ahaz, whose brother was slain, the words "king's son" evidently meaning a son of Jotham, for Ahaz was but twenty years old. There also perished the chief chamberlain, the chief counsellor and 120,000 Jews. It was indeed a large number, but in ancient warfare the defeated lost a very great proportion of their forces. Darius, for example, lost about 110,000 out of about 132,000 at Issus; 100,000 of 300,000 fell at Plataea; and 150,000 of 260,000 Armenians were slain at Tigranocerta. Further, of the Jews, 200,000 men, women and children were sent captive to Samaria, where Oded, a prophet, obtained their liberty by appealing to the Levitical law, xxv. 39-46, against the enslavement of Jews.

In that dark day for Jerusalem, Edom carried off captives from the south-east; and the Philistines seized towns in the west. Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Syria

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joined forces, and prepared to invest Jerusalem. So Isaiah tells us :

- vii. 1. And it happened in the days of Ahaz,  
Son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah,  
  
Rezin, king of Syria, went up,  
And Pekah, son of Remaliah, king of Israel,  
  
[To] Jerusalem, to war against it ;  
And he could not war against it.

The last line is written in anticipation of Rezin's failure to take Jerusalem by assault, though intermediate events are yet to be described. In the expression, "he could not war," Isaiah both uses the singular, and employs the word "war" in the sense of "war successfully." 2 *Kings* xvi. 5, like the Greek Vulgate, interprets the form as plural, and also inserts the explanation that the two kings besieged Ahaz. Therefore it is argued that the words are original in *Isaiah*, and quoted by the author of the *Kings*.

The prophet resumes the beginning of the invasion.

- vii. 2. And it was declared to the house of David,  
Saying [that] Syria rested upon Ephraim.

Ahaz is spoken of as the house of David, to which the Messianic promises had been communicated by the prophet Nathan, 2 *Samuel* vii. 16. The tribes of Israel are named Ephraim, as often by Hosea ; for this was mightiest among the divisions of Israel, and gave northern Palestine several kings as well as its capital Samaria. Further, Syria is said to rest upon Ephraim, for the armies of Damascus were encamping in the territory of the Ten Tribes with a view to the invasion of Judah. The words "rested upon" may indeed have been taken to imply agreement, so there is no need to

replace the Hebrew word by the Niphal form of another, in order to account for the "agreed with" of the Greek Vulgate, the Syriac Version and the Targum. Nor is it necessary to substitute "encamped" for "rested."

There follows a great Isaianic simile.

And his heart staggered and the heart of his people,  
Like the staggering of the trees of the forest before the  
wind.

vii. 3. And Jehovah said to Isaiah,

Go forth, pray, to meet Ahaz—  
Thou and Shear-yashûbh, thy son—

To the end of the aqueduct of the upper pool,  
To the highway of the field of the fuller.

As in northern Israel, Hosea, "salvation," and his children, Jezreel, "God sows," Lo-ruhamah, "she was not pitied," and Lo-ammi, "not My people," so in Judah, Isaiah, "the salvation of Jehovah," and his son Shear-yashûbh, "a remnant will return," bore significant names. Whether the return of the remnant would be to the Lord or the Land, or to the Lord as a condition of return from exile to the Land was still undefined. But the lad's name spoke clearly enough of a judgment, which only a remnant would survive.

Ahaz was outside the wall, inspecting that end of the aqueduct which was open to the enemy. As to the exact spot, on which Ahaz was standing, there has been much controversy. Thirty-four years later, Rabshakeh and the Assyrian soldiers of Sennacherib would stand there, and demand the surrender of the city. According to the Jewish tradition, preserved by Josephus in his *Wars*, V. vii. 3, the camp of the Assyrians lay on the north side, and hard by was the Monument of the Fuller, V. iv. 2. That quarter the Syrian and Israelite armies



would be most likely to approach. The southern pool near that of Siloam is therefore excluded, as the Mamilla pool also must be by its distance of about half a mile from the city. The true place must have been near enough for those on the wall to hear Rabshakeh's speech, xxxvi. 11. And this, together with the northern position, points to the ancient aqueduct through the wall on the east of the Damascus gate to a double pool in the northern quarter of the city.

Then Jehovah commissions Isaiah with a message to the king.

vii. 4. And thou shalt say to him :

To beware and keep [himself] quiet.

Thou shalt not fear,

And thy heart shall not be soft,

For these tails of smoking firebrands,

In the heat of the anger of Rezin and Syria and ben-Remaliah.

5. Because that Syria counselled evil against thee,  
[With] Ephraim and ben-Remaliah,

6. Saying, we shall go up into Judah, and frighten it,  
And cleave it for ourselves.

And we shall make a king king in its midst,  
Even ben-Tabeel.

Ahaz is directed to be quiet outwardly and inwardly as regards Rezin and Pekah who would frighten him, or oppress him, as some, conjecturing a metathesis of consonants, would understand the word. Pekah, the usurper, is mentioned neither by his own name nor by that of his kingdom, but contemptuously as the "son of Remaliah." Rezin's name appears as Ra-sun-nu in Tiglath-pileser's inscription, as Rāzān in the Syriac Vulgate, as Raassón in the Greek Vulgate of *Kings*, and



in that of *Isaiah* according to the best manuscripts, though there is another reading, Rasein or Rasin. Pekah and Rezin are described as the mere stumps of firebrands, or more strictly, as the fag-ends of wooden pokers or of such pieces as were used to stir the logs to a blaze. These men had nominated a Syrian for the throne of Judah; and some with little probability have identified this "son of Tabeel" with Rezin on the ground that Pekah his ally is spoken of as the "son of Remaliah" in the same passage. The man, ben-Tabeel, remains unknown to us. His name means "God is good"; but the Massoretes changed the final ē into a, not because it closes the sentence, though long e may undergo that change, as at the end of xlii. 22, but to represent the name as "good-not," that is "good-for-nothing." Just a century before the invasion of Rezin and Pekah, the king of Syria was named Tabrimmon, 1 *Kings* xv. 18, or Tab-Rammân, "Rammân is good;" and since *El*, "god," sometimes replaced the god's name in proper names of men, it may well be that Tabeel's real name was Tab-Rimmon.

Now as regards the purpose of Rezin, *Isaiah* is bidden to say:

vii. 7. Thus said the Lord Jehovah,  
It shall not rise, nor come to be.

8. For the head of Syria [is] Damascus;  
And the head of Damascus [is] Rezin.

In the first line, the four sacred letters, *J h v h*, or strictly *Y h w h*, are pointed with the vowels of *ēlōhîm*, "God," so that the full title ought to be read "Lord God." But we retain the word Jehovah to show that the Hebrew word represents the incommunicable Name. Usually, this Sacred Tetragrammaton, or four letters, is pointed

with the vowels of *ādōnāy*, my Lord, that the reader may substitute this word for the Sacred Name. Peter Galatinus, an Italian Jew, converted and become a Franciscan and confessor to Pope Leo X., has been said to be the first to compound the four consonants with the vowels of *ādōnāy*, lightening the initial very short *a* to a very short *e*. But he wrote in 1518; and the word "Jehovah" has been found in the fourteenth century theologian Porchetus, and in Raymund Martin's *Pugio Fidei*, written about 1270. We retain the word, for we know its value and history; but we do not know what vowels were originally combined with the four consonants. Some say the word is Yahweh, and point to *Ehyeh*, "I will be," in *Exodus* iii. 14, and to a Greek transliteration, as *iabé*. Others connect the word with *Yā'wa*, an element in the names of persons, supposed to be Israelites, living in Babylon. Others think the final sound ought to be more rotund, and point to the *Ya-ú* or *Yahú*, which forms an element in the names of Canaanites in Babylon, and draw attention to the *Jao* of Diodorus Siculus, the Valentinians and Origen.

As to Rezin's purpose, it shall not rise and prevail, or come to pass and be realised. For Rezin's capital and kingdom are Damascus and Syria; and to these his power shall be limited. So far we have four lines closely connected. To these correspond the next four lines, directed against the Israel of the ten northern tribes.

And within sixty and five years,  
Ephraim will be too broken to be a people.

vii. 9. And the head of Ephraim [is] Samaria;  
And the head of Samaria [is] ben-Remaliah,

As the letter *m* is prefixed to the word for "people," we may render the compound "from a people," that is, "from

being a people." Or we may urge the comparative force of the prefix, and represent the phrase by the words "too broken to be a people." But it is suggested that the whole couplet is a gloss, Condamin, for example, missing the symmetry of the arrangement, and Cheyne thinking the argument interrupted by the words. Some regard this prophecy as inconsistent with that in v. 16, against the land where Emmanuel must be fed on the milk and honey of a soil gone out of cultivation; but the latter region is Judah, which Rezin and Pekah are holding as kings, while Ahaz is besieged. Then it is alleged that such a definite date is inconsistent with the "analogy of prophecy" or the "style of Isaiah." But three years are numbered over Moab in xvi. 14, a year over Kedar in xxi. 16, and fifteen years over Hezekiah in xxxviii. 5. Then a difficulty is raised regarding the fulfilment. Now if we add 65 years to 735 B.C., we reach 670 B.C., or rather 671, for the remainder of 735 B.C. ought to be counted as a year. In 670, Esarhaddon reduced Egypt to an Assyrian province, so that his sway extended from the Euphrates to the Nile. Now it was this king, according to *Ezra* iv. 2, and some indications in his own cuneiform records, who planted Samaria and Israel with people from the Euphrates. By that time, within the given period, as Delitzsch points out, the kingdom of Samaria had already been named for the last time in an inscription that dates from 681 to 673.

In this couplet we ought to note the Hebrew words for "within" and "broken." The former is used again in xxi. 16, to mean "within" or "within yet"; and the latter is the Niphal in a passive sense, and not the active Qal.

With regard to the second couplet, we note it shows the limit of the hostile power. As to the northern tribes,



they are ruled by Samaria : and that in turn is subject to one the prophets disdain to indicate save as the “son of Remaliah.” But as to the Judeans, it is said to them :

If you will not believe,  
Surely you will not be established.

In this couplet, Isaiah uses a famous paronomasia,

*‘im lō’ thāāmînû kî lō’ théāménû,*

to emphasise the necessity of faith in God, that is, the need of submitting heart and mind to what God has revealed by His servant the prophet, who was then the teaching authority for the people of God.

Already, about 870 B.C., Jehoshaphat of Judah, according to 2 *Chronicles* xx. 20, had early in his reign, when he was about to make Edom his vassal, used a similar play on the words, saying, “Believe in Jehovah your God, and you will be established. Believe in His prophets, and prosper.” So the prosperity depends on the faith, and not the faith on the prosperity, as is suggested by this alternative, but less probable rendering of Isaiah’s words, “[It is] because you will not be established.” The surer translation found its commentary a few years later in the last words of Hosea, when he urged Ephraim to return to Jehovah and abandon its trust in the soldiers of Assyria and the horses of Egypt and the idols of Samaria. For it is faith alone that is necessary, and such faith as Abraham’s, who could trust God as true to His word and able to fulfil it. So lifted to supernatural activity in the order of grace, the father of the faithful found it a comparatively easy matter in the order of nature to enter Palestine as a pilgrim, leave Lot the choice of pastures and lay his own son on the altar. But little of Abraham’s faith lived in his descendant Ahaz.

We do not know how the king answered the prophet,



though it is plain he did not believe, for Isaiah in God's name offered him a miracle in proof. Nor can we guess how long an interval had intervened when the prophet uttered the next recorded message. Yet it would appear to have been on the same occasion, when the prophet and his boy faced the king outside the wall.

- vii. 10. And again Jehovah spoke to Ahaz ;  
 Saying, Ask thee a sign from Jehovah thy God.  
 Deepen to Sheol,  
 Or heighten to above.

Literally the words of the second line run, Ask for thee a sign from with Jehovah thy God. Evidently, the whole message means, Ask for thy own benefit a sign from the presence of Jehovah thy God, whether you prefer it in the Underworld of the Dead or in the Overworld of the Angels. And though the phrase "to above" may sound a little awkward, it may be pardoned as literal and as corresponding to the permitted phrase "from above."

The words for "deepen" and "heighten" are Hiphil and causative, and are best treated as imperatives, though they may also be absolute infinitives or even be regarded as adverbs.

It will be noticed that we have substituted the word "Sheol" for "ask" in the third line, as it was read by Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion and St. Jerome, and is parallel to the word "above" in the fourth line. The Hebrew consonants in both cases remain the same; but in "Sheol," the second vowel is *ō*, the Massoretes, however, pointing with *ā*, and leading most people to regard the word as an imperative "ask" with a paragogic *He* for a cohortative sign, though others indeed have read it also as "Sheol" with a paragogic *He* of direction, that is, as "to Sheol."

It is not easy to diagnose the king's disposition from

his answer alone. In itself, it might have been due to a remembrance of the Mosaic command in *Deuteronomy* vi. 16, "You shall not test Jehovah your God, as you tested in Massah," or "in [the place of] the testing." With these words, our Lord repelled Satan in the wilderness. But now they were employed to repel God in the person of His prophet; and the king's superstitious character, revealed in his polytheism and inhuman sacrifices, as well as his fickleness in now using the Temple for divination and now closing the building, together with his impotence to lead and his consternation in the presence of his foes, show that the answer sprang from a heart fearful and faithless.

It is not a little remarkable that Hezekiah, the successor of Ahaz, showed faith and firmness during the invasion of Sennacherib; and during his illness he gladly accepted a sign from God through Isaiah. In all this, and in much else, he presented a contrast to his predecessor. The question then arises as to the part he may have taken during the war with the Syrians and Ephraimites. That question, however, raises another as to the chronology of the time. And before this is settled, we must correct the reference of Sennacherib's invasion in 701 to Hezekiah's fourteenth year, *2 Kings* xviii. 13. With Knabenbauer, in his Latin commentary, i. 6, we hold it clear that the date has been transposed from *2 Kings* xx. 1, where it marked Hezekiah's illness, for the king reigned twenty-nine years, *2 Kings* xviii. 2, and fifteen of those years had been added after his illness, *2 Kings* xx. 6, which therefore belongs to his fourteenth year.

Hezekiah's sixth year was also the ninth year of Hoshea, king of Israel, as well as the date of Samaria's fall, which was completed in 721 by Shalmaneser's trans-

portation of the inhabitants, 2 *Kings* xviii. 9. So Hezekiah's fourteenth year and illness are noted by 713 B.C.; his twenty-ninth year and death by 698; his first year by 726, though he had really become king the preceding year, 727. At his accession he was twenty-five years of age, 2 *Kings* xviii. 2 and 2 *Chronicles* xxix. 1. Accordingly, he would have been seventeen years of age in 735, when Ahaz was twenty years old, 2 *Kings* xvi. 2 and 2 *Chronicles* xxviii. 1. Ahaz could not therefore have been literally and naturally the father of Hezekiah.

Now Ahaz reigned from 735 to 727. The length of his reign was therefore eight years, and not the sixteen we find in the present text of 2 *Kings* xvi. 2 and 2 *Chronicles* xxviii. 1. Further, the first year of Hoshea, king of Israel, as we shall see, was the second of Ahaz, and not the twelfth, as we read in 2 *Kings* xvii. 1. The larger numbers cannot include years during which Ahaz reigned jointly with Jotham; for Ahaz, had he completed a reign of sixteen years in 727, would have ascended the throne in 743, that is, before the death of Uzziah and at twelve years of age. It would appear therefore that a scribe has doubled the "eight," whether mistaking the numeral for its double, or confusing the length of Ahaz's reign with the sixteen years of Jotham's, 2 *Kings* xv. 33.

There still remains the difficulty as to the ages of Ahaz and Hezekiah, described as his son. In 735, they are given as twenty and seventeen respectively. Those twenty years, ascribed to Ahaz, are quite consistent with Jotham's forty-one years at his death that year. And the seventeen years, ascribed to Hezekiah, are quite consistent with his conduct eight years later at his accession in 727. For the task he at once undertook in regard to idolaters at home and enemies abroad showed



power and character beyond the years of a child, even though we allow much for a reaction among the priests. Certainly Urijah the priest, though he was made God's witness in 734, *Isaiah* viii. 2, was in 732 so subservient to Ahaz in raising and using a heathen altar within the Temple court, *2 Kings* xvi. 16, that we cannot suppose him to have lent Hezekiah the assistance Hilkiah in 621 afforded Josiah, then twenty-six years of age. Again, in 713, during his illness, Hezekiah described himself as in the pause or noon of his days, an expression too indefinite for chronological investigations, even if the Hebrew word implies more than a time of peace. It would certainly be consistent with his being thirty-seven years of age at the time, and therefore with his having been seventeen years of age in 735.

We suggest therefore that Hezekiah was the brother of Ahaz, who had sacrificed his own son, *2 Kings* xvi. 3, and indeed his children, *2 Chronicles* xxviii. 3, whether as an idolatrous act to gain help against his enemies, after the fashion of what the king of Moab had done about 852, a little more than a century earlier, *2 Kings* iii. 27, or as the worshippers of the Phœnician Baal, under whatever name they adored it, were wont to do. Childless then himself, there would be nothing extraordinary if Ahaz were to recognise Hezekiah as his son and heir under such circumstances. The law of Israel indeed did not provide for a formal transfer of filial rights and duties, yet the Code of Hammurabi, § 185-193, regulated the relationship in the days of Abraham, Mordecai took Esther for his own daughter, *Esther* ii. 7, and Salathiel became recognised as son and heir of the King Jehoiachin.

Salathiel's case in particular presents an interesting parallel to Hezekiah's. Jehoiachin, known also as



Jeconiah, Coniah, Joakim, Jechonias and Jechoniah, had seven sons, among whom is reckoned Salathiel or Shealtiel, noted specially as his son, 1 *Chronicles* iii. 17, 18. Yet Jehoiachin was written childless, according to Jeremiah's prediction, xxii. 30, and according to the prophecy that Jehoiachin's father Jehoiakim should have none to sit on the throne of David, *Jeremiah* xxxvi. 30. But after he was carried to Babylon, says *St. Matthew*, i. 12, Jehoiachin begat Shealtiel, that is, Salathiel. Now Jehoiachin was freed from prison by Evil-Merodach, "Mardûk's man," in 561. At that time Salathiel had already attained manhood, for in 536, that is twenty-five years afterwards, his son Zerubbabel led the returning exiles and governed Judea, *Ezra* ii. 2; *Haggai* ii. 21. Nor need we stop to question Salathiel's relation to Zerubbabel on account of the Massoretic Hebrew text and Lucian's edition of the Greek Vulgate in 1 *Chronicles* iii. 19, both of which represent Salathiel's brother Pedaiah as Zerubbabel's father. That Salathiel was father of Zerubbabel is attested not only by the Vatican and Alexandrian manuscripts of the Greek Vulgate in the passage in question, but also by the Massoretic text in the other passages where Zerubbabel's father is mentioned, as for example in *Ezra* iii. 2, 8; v. 2; *Nehemiah*, xii. 1; *Haggai*, i. 1, 12, 14; ii. 2, 23; *Matthew*, i. 12. Further, Salathiel is not only a grown man in 561, but he is also known to St. Luke as the son of Neri. As then Salathiel was the son of Neri, and being a grown man, was accepted as son and heir-apparent by Jehoiachin, when that king's own sons had died, so we may suppose that Hezekiah, being but three years younger than Ahaz himself, was acknowledged as son officially and next to the throne, when the king's own sons had perished in idolatrous fires.

Hezekiah then was apparently son of Jotham and brother of Ahaz, as must also have been "Maaseiah the king's son," slain in battle when Pekah invaded Judah in the first year of Ahaz, then twenty years of age, *2 Chronicles* xxviii. 7. And the matter might have been determined more definitely, had we been given the name of Ahaz's mother. Hezekiah's mother was the daughter of Zechariah, and named Abi in *2 Kings* xviii. 2, and more fully Abijah in *2 Chronicles* xxix. 1. But Ahaz's mother is unnamed; and this is the more strange as the omission is made only in his case and in that of Jehoram, *2 Kings* viii. 16, among all the Judæan kings. It may be that his mother was Hezekiah's, and that a scribe, not understanding how Hezekiah could be called the son of Ahaz and yet have the same mother, omitted the mother's name in Ahaz's case. Yet Asa, *1 Kings* xv. 8, is called the son of Abijam, and the mother of both was Maachah, the daughter of Uriel and Absalom's daughter Tamar. Further, Asa is described as old when he died, *1 Kings* xv. 23; yet if he had been the son of Abijam in the strict sense of the phrase, he could not have been more than fifty.

Then as the result of our chronological and genealogical inquiry, we may assume tentatively that Hezekiah was a lad of seventeen years when Isaiah stood before Ahaz and offered him a sign.

Provoked by the king's refusal, Isaiah spoke:

vii. 13. And he said:

Hear you, now,  
House of David.

Is it too small a thing for you to weary men,  
That you will also weary my God?

Isaiah, in using the plural, shows he is addressing Ahaz

and the royal princes in speaking to the house of David, heirs of the Messianic promises given through Nathan, 2 *Samuel* vii. 16. They have not merely tried the patience of the prophet, but they are also tempting or testing God, of whom Isaiah now speaks as “my God” and no longer as “thy God,” since Ahaz has virtually apostatised.

Then the prophet announces the miracle of miracles.

vii. 14. Therefore my Lord will give—  
He [will give] a sign to you.

Behold, the Virgin has conceived,  
And [is] bearing a Son.

And thou [Woman] wilt call His name,  
“God [is] with us.”

Micah, in his fourth chapter, from which Isaiah took his earliest text, c. ii. 2, had announced the deportation of the Jews to Babylon; and in his fifth chapter, he announces a ruler and deliverer to be born at Bethlehem. But Judah, he predicts, will be given up by God to the enemy till the coming of that King, as it is said, c. v. 3.

Therefore He will give them,  
Till the time a bearing woman has borne.

Further, Micah, as Isaiah after him, speaks of Immanuel's Mother, but neither prophet of His Father. Indeed Micah unveils Immanuel's personal pre-existence in saying of Him, c. v. 2.

And His goings forth [were] from of old,  
From the days of eternity.

Isaiah begins his announcement with the word “therefore,” because Ahaz has refused the sign, which would prove God's power and truth. Therefore God Himself, and of Himself, will give a sign to show Himself able and faith-



ful to fulfil the Messianic promises, however dark the outlook now may be. Beyond the Syro-Ephraimite war of the present, Isaiah will presently announce an Assyrian invasion ; and that in turn will be followed by a Babylonian Captivity, as Micah has already foretold, iv. 10. Other disasters will follow ; but there cannot be an utter destruction of the nation, for it bears the Messianic hope. The royal line of David is established as securely as the advent of Immanuel ; and the announcement of that advent by God through His prophet becomes a sign, a pledge though in the future, that the promises have not been annulled nor the people abandoned by Jehovah. The sign certainly is to be realised in the future, as was that sign God gave Moses in proof of his divine commission, *Exodus* iii. 12, promising him that he and the people should serve God in Sinai after their deliverance from Egypt. Such a sign depends on belief in God's almighty power and perfect veracity—that is, on faith such as Abraham expressed in offering up the son on whom the promises depended, for in so doing he showed he regarded God as both faithful to His word and almighty to raise the child from death, *Hebrews* xi. 17–19. It is true that such an announcement would be rejected by the faithless ; for they harden themselves by rejecting the graces, which follow in judgment the grace offered in mercy. But in making the announcement, Isaiah was fulfilling the command given him at his call, vi. 10, when he was bidden to

Fatten the heart of this people ;  
And make its ears heavy ;  
And besmear its eyes.

In regard to the announcement itself, questions have arisen as to the form of the Hebrew word for “call,” the



bearer of the name Immanuel, and the exact implication of the word rendered "Virgin."

First of all, in reference to the word translated "thou [Woman] wilt call," the Massoretes, in pointing the consonants with the vowels of the second person feminine, follow the tradition of Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus, and the Greek Vulgate in the Vatican and Alexandrian manuscripts. With the Greek Vulgate in the Sinaitic manuscript, but without probability, others interpret the word as "she will call," and explain the form as archaic. Others without ground add a long  $\bar{a}$  under the final consonant, so that the word means "thou [Ahaz] wilt call."

In the second place, there is much controversy regarding the child to be named Immanuel, "God [is] with us." But we must bear in mind that we have here only the first stroke of the pencil. Isaiah is expressing the first indication of what he will, in the manner especially his own, develop into a complete picture. Yet even within the limits of the verse, we may determine something definite regarding the bearer of the name. It could not be Isaiah's elder son, Shear-yashûbh, because the lad is already born and present on the occasion. Nor indeed, in spite of medieval Jews like Rashi and Aben Ezra, could it be any son of Isaiah, for his wife had already borne Shear-yashûbh, and was therefore no longer a virgin. To answer, with Gesenius and Bunsen, that the prophet married a second time is to adopt a pure fiction for the sake of a supposition, already bankrupt. Nor again could it be Hezekiah, in spite of the Jews referred to by St. Justin, writing *against Trypho*, 43, and by St. Jerome, commenting on this passage of Isaiah, for Hezekiah, at that very time was already a lad of seventeen years. Further, it could not involve such an anticlimax as the pointing to some young woman about to

become a mother, for it is a sign given by Jehovah in place of the miracle Ahaz had just refused to receive from the world of the angels or from that of departed souls. As St. Irenæus urges in his work *against Heresies*, iii. 26, there had been no sign in a young woman's conception in the ordinary way. The miracle is in the birth of the child Immanuel; and the miracle in the birth is the Virginal Conception. The fulfilment of the prediction is found by *St. Matthew*, i. 22, in the Incarnation of our Lord. Since the Jews did not apply the prophecy to the Messiah, it is clear that Isaiah's words did not suggest the account of our Lord's Birth. On the contrary, it was that account which recalled the prophet's message. And the connection between the two lay in the Virgin Birth.

In the third place, however, there has been vehement controversy as to the meaning of the word translated "The Virgin." This word '*almáh*' has been rendered *parthénos* in the Greek Vulgate; and an examination of a concordance to that version will show the translators implied a virgin in the strict sense of the term. In the same sense the word was rendered in the Syriac Vulgate, made by men well acquainted with the Hebrew text and the Greek Vulgate; and their translation *b'thâl'thā'* certainly means a virgin. In our first century, the Greek Vulgate was always followed by Philo and generally by Josephus. But the version became such a weapon in the hands of Christians, that the Talmudical treatise *Sopherim* or "Scribes," i., held the day of the completed translation as hard for Israel as that of the golden calf. Further, the Rabbinical roll, *Taanith* or "Fasting," towards its end, declares the fast on the eighth day of the month of Tebeth to mark the completion of the Septuagint Pentateuch on that day in the time of Ptolemy, that is, of Ptolemy II, Philadelphus,

285–247 B.C.; and it asserts that then darkness fell on the earth for three days. That this attitude was due to controversy with Christians is evident from the fact that it was assumed in our second century. In our first century, the Jews of Alexandria, as Philo informs us in his *Life of Moses*, vi., vii., had held the day of the completion as a festival, and acknowledged that God had answered the translators' prayers for a blessing on their effort to make His ordinances known to all men. And further evidence that we have indicated the true motive for the change of attitude is found in the altered translation of the verse before us. First of all, Aquila, a convert to Judaism and a pupil of Rabbi Akiba, in the time of Hadrian, 117–138 A.D., made a very literal translation of the Hebrew Bible. In our verse, he substituted *neánis*, "a young woman," for the "virgin" of the Greek Vulgate. He was followed in this by Theodotion, another proselyte, probably in the time of Commodus, 180–193. Afterwards under Severus, 193–211, Symmachus made a translation with more attention to literary form. He too followed Aquila in substituting "young woman" for "virgin."

It is true there is in Hebrew another word *b'thûlah*, also rendered "virgin." It is employed of maidens in *Deuteronomy* xxii. 23 and 2 *Samuel* xiii. 2, and of uncaptured cities like Jerusalem, *Isaiah* xxxvii. 22, and Babylon, *Isaiah* xlvii. 1. But this word is also used of ruined Israel, *Jeremiah*, xxxi. 4, and of violated Zion, *Isaiah* xxiii. 12, as well as of a widow, *Joel* i. 8. Then as to the word '*almáh*, we must treat it on its own merits; and since usage is the rule of speech, we must examine the nine passages in which the word is found. The masculine form is indeed used of the lad David, as he went out against Goliath, 1 *Samuel* xvii. 56, and of Jonathan's



servant boy, 1 *Samuel* xx. 22; and certainly there is nothing in either case to militate against an implication of virginity in the feminine form of the word. In *Genesis* xxiv. 43, that form is used of the "virgin" destined for Isaac's wife. There, and again in *Exodus* ii. 8, where it is used of Miriam, the sister of Moses, the word plainly refers to a true virgin.

In *Psalms* lxxviii. 26, we find a procession of singers and of players on stringed instruments, who advance towards the sanctuary amid "virgins" playing on tambourines. It is true these maidens occupy a position analogous to that of those who accompanied Miriam. In *Exodus* xv. 20, all the women are included; but the Psalmist is singing of a Temple procession, from which married women would naturally be excluded; and in such a case the unmarried would certainly be regarded as virgins, for Israelite custom and tradition would not admit the fallen to such a privilege.

In the title of *Psalms* xlvii., the tune is said to be composed "upon 'ālāmôth," that is, as Perowne, i. 87, suggests, "after the manner of maidens," Aquila and St. Jerome rendering it less definitely as "for youths." In 1 *Chronicles* xv. 20, the lutes are set "upon 'ālāmôth," that is, in the tone of girls' voices, and in contrast with the harps, v. 21, set "upon *Shemînûth*," "upon the eighth" or octave, that is, according to the compass of a man's voice. But of course, we cannot interpret the literary sense of a word from its technical use as a musical term, though even in this regard, the word suggests an unmarried woman, and therefore, except to the unclean mind, a virgin.

Twice the word occurs in the *Song of Songs*. In the first case, i. 3, it is simply said that "virgins love the bridegroom"; but the second case is quite definite, for



three classes are enumerated, the “virgins” being distinguished from both queens and concubines. Besides the line in *Isaiah* vii. 14, there is yet another passage which contains the word. In this, *Proverbs* xxx. 19, four things are described as beyond the writer’s knowledge. These are the way of the eagle in the heavens, the way of a serpent over a rock, the way of a ship in the heart of the sea, and the way of a man with a “virgin.” That is to say, no outward visible traces are left to tell what had happened. This is then illustrated by the case of an adulteress, who has eaten and wiped her mouth, and said, “I have not wrought iniquity.” For in such a case of secret sin, none can point to visible proofs of guilt. And in the expression regarding the way of a man, it is of importance that the word “virgin” be used in the strict sense, else the phrase becomes pointless in ceasing to imply a great change without public trace.

Therefore, without hesitation, we translate ‘*almáh*’ as “virgin,” employing that word in its strictest sense. At the same time, we regard the article prefixed as indicating a particular woman, even her whom *Micah*, v. 3, had already announced as the Mother of Messiah.

As to Immanuel the Messiah, *Isaiah* continues :

- vii. 15. He will eat curdled milk and honey,  
When he knows to refuse the evil and to choose  
the good.
16. For before the lad will know to refuse the evil and to  
choose the good,  
The ground, whose two kings thou [art] fearing, will  
be forsaken.
17. Jehovah will bring upon thee  
And upon thy people and upon the house of thy father  
Days, which have not come  
From the day of the departing of Ephraim from Judah.  
[He will bring] this very king of Assyria.

In v. 15, the word translated "when he knows" is formed of the particle *l*, the construct infinitive and the third personal pronoun in its suffix form. A question arises as to the force of the particle. Some say it has a final sense and means "in order that," as in the Latin Vulgate. So it may, in spite of Skinner's classroom jest as to the formation of ethical character by eating butter and honey. For it is certain that a school of discipline might well be found in the hardships of a nomad's life on nomad's food in a land gone out of cultivation. Not Messiah only, but everyone else also may learn obedience from what they suffer, *Hebrews* v. 8; and it is said as generally as truly that it is good for the man that he bear a yoke in his youth, *Lamentations* iii. 27. Still the particle may have a temporal sense, and mean "when." In this very passage, the Greek Vulgate, supported by the Targum, renders it by "before that." In *Genesis* xxiv. 63, we find it in the phrase "at the turning of evening," that is, "when evening approaches." In *Exodus* xiv. 27, there is a similar expression, "at the turning of morning," or when the morning approaches." And in 2 *Samuel* xviii. 29, it is used in the Hebrew expression for "when Job sent the servant." As a matter of fact, *l* with the infinitive forms a kind of gerund, meaning according to the context either "to," or "so that," or "till," or "when," or "while," or "as." In the present case, we think it means "when," because the two verses, 15 and 16, taken together, appear to say that Judah, which Rezin and Pekah hold at the moment, will be deserted before Immanuel attains the age of reason; and therefore, when He attains that age, He will live on a land without corn or olive or grape. It is a vivid and pictorial way of saying that Immanuel will be born in poverty.

In spite of all the ancient witnesses, it has been urged

that the last words of the passage, "king of Assyria," are a later explanatory gloss, though a correct one. First of all, the words stand in a line by themselves; and secondly, they are unsuitable in apposition to the word "days." We must remember that Ahaz, at the very moment, was forming an alliance with Assyria that would result in his own vassalage and the ultimate invasion of Judah. Isaiah, with great dramatic force, indicates his king's refuge as itself a source of danger. And this announcement gains in power by its presentation in a single line. So in c. i. 20, the prophet concludes his appeal with one line,

For the Mouth of Jehovah has spoken it.

Again in c. v. 9, he commences with the single line,

In my ears [is revealed] Jehovah of Hosts.

And we shall meet similar examples in viii. 4, 8, 10, and ix. 6.

Nor can it be urged against the words "king of Assyria" that they are unsuitable in apposition to "days." They are not in such apposition, but follow a long relative clause and the completed sentence. We must also note that they commence with the particle *'eth*. We may follow the Greek Vulgate in regarding that word as the sign of the accusative, some such verb as "He will bring" being understood. Or with St. Jerome in the Latin Vulgate, we may translate it as "with," and explain the passage as meaning that the Lord will bring disastrous days together with the king of Assyria. There is also a use of the particle as meaning "this very" or "this same." For example, we read in *Joshua* xxii. 17,

Is it little for us—*this same* iniquity of Peor?



and in *Daniel*, ix. 13,

As written in the Law of Moses,  
All this, *this very* evil has come upon us.

It is therefore such a particle of emphasis as we might expect under Isaiah's circumstances. The phrase still requires such a verb as "He will bring," which may be regarded as mentally repeated from the beginning of the verse. But the phrase itself acquires great emphasis and incisive force, as Delitzsch sees and Cheyne does not.

Thus v. 17, announces more dread disasters than any that had yet fallen upon Judah, since Jeroboam led the schismatic ten tribes from their allegiance to Rehoboam of Jerusalem after the death of Solomon. At the same time, it indicates Assyria, the national hope, as the national peril.

So the future stands before Isaiah in a perspective of importance, not of time. He sees the Assyrian invasion, the desolation of Judah, and Immanuel's birth in poverty. The events are indeed far apart in time, yet their connection is essential. The Assyrian affliction was developed by Babylon, Greece, Syria, and Rome. Then Immanuel was born, and in poverty. At the moment of his utterance, Isaiah read only the Assyrian chapter in the history of disaster; but he announced Immanuel's birth to assure the faithful that God would be faithful to His promise. It was a pledge from the All-true and All-mighty through His accredited messenger. And that pledge remained, as Briggs says in his *Messianic Prophecy*, p. 198, "as the abiding prediction of comfort through all the subsequent periods of affliction until the Messiah was born of the Virgin Mary."

Then Isaiah expands that brief phrase, "this very king of Assyria," into a prophecy of four strophes or stanzas,



each consisting of strangely brief lines, and marked by the key-word "in that day," already employed in ii. 20, iii. 18, and iv. 8. The first strophe reads:

vii. 18. And it will be in that day  
Jehovah will whistle  
For the fly,  
Which [is] in the end of the Niles of Egypt,  
And for the bee,  
Which [is] in the land of Assyria.

19. And they will come,  
And rest, all of them,  
In the ravines of the wastes  
And in the clefts of the rocks  
And in all the thorn-hedges  
And in all the pastures.

In c. v. 25, Isaiah had already announced that Jehovah, raising an ensign and whistling for them, would summon the nations to execute judgment on Judah. There the picture is of the Assyrian. Here Judah is afflicted by Assyrian and Egyptian, or to be more accurate, by Assyrian and Ethiopian. Swarms of bees and swarms of flies readily furnished Isaiah, as Homer, *Iliad* ii. 87, 469, and Æschylus, *Persæ*, 128, with a figure for crowds of people or soldiers. The metaphor borrows another element from those Syrians who call their pigeons home by whistling.

Whether the fly is the tsetse fly, or the seroot fly of southern Egypt and Nubia, cannot be decided. Very probably, the word is used for flies in general, as Egypt endured a plague of such in the days of Moses, *Exodus* viii. 21-31, and indeed was always infested with them. *Isaiah* xviii. 1, however, speaks of the Ethiopians as sending ambassadors from "the land of the whirring of

wings." For "whirring" or "rustling," he uses the word *tsiltsál*, the construct case of *ts'lātsál*, a reduplicated form from *tsālál*, "to tingle." And it is noteworthy that *tsaltsalya* is the name of the tsetse fly among the Galla tribes. But whether it be the tsetse or not, the fly is used by Isaiah to represent armies in the "end of the Niles," the end or district farthest from Jerusalem. It is a poetic way of describing the Ethiopia of the ancients, that is, the country in general south of Egypt. There the Blue and White Niles unite, and are afterwards joined by the Atbara to form the great river, the Egyptian *yaru'ū*, that title becoming *yě'ôr* in Hebrew and its plural denoting the tributaries.

As Egypt and Ethiopia were the home of flies, so the bee was characteristic of the wooded hills in Assyria. And the wild bee, that made its home in hollow trees or ravine cliffs, well symbolised the ferocious soldiery of Assyria.

It was natural to suppose that the peoples of the Tigris and Euphrates, and they of the Nile, would each attempt again the complete conquest of Palestine. The former had ruled it for five centuries from 3000 B.C., and for another five centuries from 2200 B.C. The latter had held sway in it for less than two centuries, from the expulsion of the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings from Egypt by Aahmes and his campaign in Palestine and Syria about 1560 B.C., till the time of the Tell-el-Amarna letters about 1392, when Syria was invaded by the Hittites from the north, and Palestine was overrun by the Aramæan Khabiri.

It was also clear that not only the desire for Palestine, but the clash of empires would make the Holy Land a battle-field for the Egyptians and the Assyrians, as it had been for the Egyptians and the Hittites during twenty

years in the days of Ramessu II, Sesostris, till the treaty of 1304 B.C. gave Palestine to Egypt.

But Isaiah's prophecy includes an element that could not have been humanly foreseen at the moment. He was speaking in 735; and it was not till some years later the Ethiopians became rulers of Egypt. In 720 at Raphia, a little south of Gaza, Sargon fought and defeated Hanno of Gaza and his Egyptian or rather Ethiopian ally, So or Sewe. At Eltekeh in 701, Sennacherib defeated the Egyptian troops and their Ethiopian commander. And Psammetik I of Egypt, having risen about 647 to check the Assyrian, took Ashdod and reduced Syria. But Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled in the slaying of Josiah, king of Judah, by the Egyptian Necho II in 609 at Megiddo, south of Carmel, and the defeat of Necho II himself by Nebuchadrezzar at Carchemish in 605. Egypt fell, and Nebuchadrezzar's empire extended from the deserts of Arabia to the mountains of Armenia, and, except Tyre, from the Euphrates to the Nile. The empire of Babylon succeeds and represents that of Nineveh, which fell in 606. Therefore in the next stanza, the invader from beyond the river Euphrates is spoken of as the king of Assyria, and Egypt is not named.

In c. v. 6, we rendered *bāthāh* as "waste" in regard to the vineyard, so in v. 19, we now translate the really identical word *battāh* as "waste," and not as "abrupt," "precipitous," which would rather represent *bātsûr*. The mention of ravines, rocks, hedges, and pastures completes the picture of the swarming insects, which naturally select such places. By such means the prophet suggests the readiness with which the invader will settle in the land. It may be added that the word for "thorn-hedges" is a reduplicated form of a root not found in Hebrew,



but in Aramaic, where it means to pierce or prick. The word for "pastures" is also a reduplicated form, but derived from a root meaning "to lead," and signifying the place to which cattle are led.

The second strophe or stanza describes the completeness of the devastation under the figure of shaving, the king of Assyria being the razor.

vii. 20. In that day  
       The Lord will shave  
       With the hired razor  
       Beyond [the] River—  
       With the king of Assyria—  
       The head and the hair of the feet.  
       And also the beard  
       It will scrape off.

The expression "the hired razor" is literally "the razor of the hiring." *Nāhār*, "river," is derived from a root meaning "to flow," and is used with the article to denote the Euphrates, except in xix. 5, where it means the Nile. In this passage, it certainly refers to the Euphrates, though it is used poetically without the article. The phrase "beyond the River," or "in the places across the River," means the east of the Euphrates, though the parallel Aramaic phrase in *Ezra* iv. 10, 11, 16, 20; c. v. 3; vi. 6, 8, 13; vii. 21, 25, means the west of that river, for these passages assume the Persian standpoint. It ought to be noted that the verb in the last couplet is feminine, though it refers to the razor, which is regarded as masculine by other writers. And Condamin's translation, ambiguous at the best, is unfortunate in suggesting that the subject of the verb "scrape off" is "he," that is, the Lord. Judah then will be shaven even to the beard, the sign of dignity, by



the very razor Ahaz proposes to hire with the gold and silver in the Temple and the royal palace, 2 *Kings* xvi. 8. Many modern commentators regard the words "the king of Assyria" as a gloss. It is difficult, however, to reject the ancient authorities in favour of a mere conjecture, which, after all, was framed without regarding the suitability of the phrase. For we note there is no longer mention of Assyria and Egypt, but of Assyria alone. And the name "Assyria," as the fulfilment in Nebuchadrezzar proves, is implicitly extended to the Babylonian Empire, in which the rule, policy, and military power of the Assyrian were continued. Not only so, but as Delitzsch notes, the four empires, from the Babylonian to the Roman, only unfold what began in Assyria; and the Son of the Virgin may be regarded from the prophetic standpoint as born under Assyrian oppressions, for then "the Holy Land, deprived of its earlier fulness of blessing, found itself under the supremacy of the universal empire, and in a condition which went back to the unbelief of Ahaz as its ultimate cause."

The third strophe or stanza describes the nomad state of the inhabitants after the devastation.

vii. 21. And it will be in that day,  
A man will keep alive

A heifer of the herd  
And two sheep.

22. And it will be from abundance—  
To make milk—

He will eat curdled [milk],  
For he will eat curdled [milk] and honey—

Everyone who is left  
Amid the land.

In the land, devastated and depopulated, a man will wander with a cow and two sheep to seek pasture for them. Then with irony the prophet commences to tell of the abundance they will find. It is not an abundance of corn, grapes, and olives, but of grass, overgrowing all places. It is such an abundance as furthers the formation of milk. Then the man himself must live on curdled milk, and on honey made by wild bees in the lonely places. Such shall be the characteristic lot of those whom Nebuchadrezzar shall leave in the land. And the record of the fulfilment may be read in the *Lamentations* of Jeremiah.

The fourth and last strophe describes the reign of briars and brambles over the land that once not only flowed with milk and honey, but was also a land of wheat and barley and vine and fig-tree and pomegranate and oil olive, *Deuteronomy* viii. 8.

vii. 23. And it will be in that day,  
Every place will be—

Where will be a thousand vines  
At a thousand silver [coins]—  
For the brier and for the bramble  
It will be.

24. With the arrows and with the bow  
He will come thither,  
Because brier and bramble  
All the land will be.

25. And all the mountains,  
Which will be hoed with the hoe—  
Thou wilt not come thither,  
[For] fear of brier and bramble.  
And it will be for the sending forth of oxen  
And for the treading of sheep.

The interrupted character of v. 23 is evident. Evident

too is the meaning. *Shāmār* and *shayîth*, "brier" and "bramble," will take the place of vines, each worth a shekel of silver, that is 2s. 9d., and therefore of excellent quality, as we may judge from the valuation of an ordinary vine to-day in Syria at little more than twopence. To such places huntsmen indeed may go, but none else.

Then the prophet speaks directly to the inhabitant, saying, "Thou wilt not come thither [for] fear of brier and bramble." We insert "for" in the sense of "from" or "because of," as the prefix *m* is understood before the word we render "fear." Knabenbauer indeed thinks our translation contradicts v. 24, which tells of the huntsman's coming. But he overlooks the fact that v. 24 speaks of specially favoured vineyards and v. 25 of the mountains. The Latin Vulgate does not insert the "for," and interprets the verbal form not as the second person masculine, but as the third person feminine. Therefore it renders the passage, "Fear of thorns and brambles will not come thither." The translation is possible, but it does not accord with the context, unless it means, as Skinner suggests, that there cannot be any more anxiety about thorns, because the place is so hopelessly overgrown with them.

The Greek Vulgate is unfortunate in its rendering. It reads, "And every ploughed mountain will be ploughed. In no wise may fear come to [one] there. For there will be of the dry ground and thorn for food of sheep and tread of ox." But if the sense were that fear might not come thither, then, as Delitzsch notes, the word "come" would have the third person plural suffix. Nor can we, with Condamin, render the verb impersonally as "one shall come," for that would require the form of the third person masculine singular; and to translate the "thou"

as "one" is to lose the dramatic force of the suddenness and directness with which the prophet menaces each of his countrymen.

Though the words for "oxen" and "sheep" are singular, they are used collectively. The mountain vineyards will become cattle-runs and sheep-walks, that men may send their cattle there to seek pasture, and that sheep may trample the ground in search of herbage.



## CHAPTER VIII

As Isaiah had failed to make any impression on Ahaz, God gave the prophet the message recorded in the opening verses of c. viii.

viii. 1. And Jehovah said to me,  
Take to thee a great tablet.

And write on it with the pen of a man,  
For Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

2. And do thou take in witness for Me  
Faithful witnesses,

Uriah the priest  
And Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.

Isaiah, rejected by the king, is commanded to announce his message to the people, though the wording would be an enigma. He is directed to take a large *gillāyôn*. This is the first Hebrew word in iii. 23, where it is included in the names of women's clothes and ornaments. There, however, we found it advisable to adopt other vowels, and render the word as "gauze." But the ancient consonants and the Massoretic vowels, inserted about our seventh century, together represented the Hebrew word for "mirrors," these articles consisting of metal plates, such as that to which Elihu compared the sky, *Job* xxxvii. 18, and those of which Moses made the bronze laver for the Tabernacle, *Exodus* xxxviii. 8. Now *gāláh*, the root of the word, means "to be" or "make naked," so the name really implies something smooth

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and bare. As Isaiah was to write on this, it was probably of wood, as we suppose the *lûach* or tablet in c. xxx. 8 to have been. And we translate the expression simply as a "large tablet."

The writing must be with the pen of a man. The word for "pen" meant a "graving tool" in the case of the instrument Aaron used to fashion the golden calf, *Exodus* xxxii. 4. It was also used of the instrument for inscribing wood or stone, that is, of a *stylus*. And as this Latin name gave us the word "style," so the Hebrew word came in the present passage to mean style or character. The word for "man" is not *'îsh*, *vir*, with the notion of manliness, nor *'ādām*, *homo*, a word often used collectively to denote the human race, but *'ēnôsh*, man as poor and weak, and so collectively "the common people." The phrase therefore means "in the style of the common people." This cannot be the square Hebrew letters, which came from the Phœnician through the Sidonian and Aramæan alphabets to the Jews after the Exile. It must refer to plain, angular forms of the Israelitic alphabet, which could easily be read by the multitude. Of such forms, besides that on the Megiddo lion-seal and that in the Gezer inscription, both probably of the eighth century B.C., we have four important examples. First, there have been found at Cyprus, fragments of two bronze bowls with inscriptions to Baal of Lebanon, and evidently carried off from a temple to Baal on Lebanon. One of these is supposed to have been made about 950 B.C.; the other, about 850. Nearly contemporaneous with the latter is the Moabite Stone, which Mesha placed at Dibon to commemorate his victories over the Ten Tribes after Ahab's death in 853 B.C., little more than a century before Isaiah's call. The fourth example is that of the Siloam Inscription in the tunnel

from the Pool of the Virgin through the hill of Ophel to the Pool of Siloam. Some have attributed this inscription to the time of Manasseh, Hezekiah's son; but it was more probably made in the time of Hezekiah, as the tunnel is probably the conduit made by that king, *2 Kings* xx. 20, *2 Chronicles* xxxii. 30. In that case, the Siloam Inscription would be dated about 701, and therefore about thirty-four years later than Isaiah's tablet. Then from the dates and places of these inscriptions, we conclude that the prophet's tablet also was written in the angular letters, and not in cuneiform, as Jeremias and Berger suppose. It is true, a cuneiform tablet of 651 B.C., and another of 648 B.C., both of Manasseh's reign, have been found at Gezer, nineteen miles west-north-west of Jerusalem; but they are in Assyrian form, and were evidently connected with an Assyrian colony at Gezer in the days of Asshur-banipal's dominion over Judah.

The prophet was directed to inscribe the tablet with the Hebrew words, *Mahēr' Shālāl' Chāsh Baz*. The first of these is from a root meaning "to speed," and may be the imperative of the intensive form, that is, "speed as much as possible"; or it may be the adjective "speedy" as in *Zephaniah* i. 14, or the adverb "speedily," as in *Joshua* ii. 5. Some indeed regard the word as a participle; and in that case the *m'*, which is the prefix and sign of the participle in the Piel or intensive form, has fallen away before the *m* of the root. The second word is from a root meaning "to spoil," and signifies "spoil." The third word is *chāsh* or *hāsh*, the initial *h* being generally distinguished from the mere aspirate by a dot underneath, and being equivalent to the Scotch *ch*. The word is the third person singular masculine of the perfect tense from the root *chūsh*, "to hasten," as



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in *Deuteronomy* xxxii. 35, and *Habbakuk* i. 8. It is really onomatopœic, imitating such a sound of hasty motion as English people sometimes employ to drive away animals. In that case, the word means "hastened." But it may also be the active participle of the Qal or simple form, and signify "hastening." The fourth word is formed from the root *bāzáz*, which primarily means "to pull in pieces," and then "to snatch away." So the noun means "prey" or "booty."

In v. 1, the Greek Vulgate explains the inscription as "To make swiftly a plunder of spoils"; but in v. 3, it renders the Hebrew "Quickly spoil, swiftly plunder." So it renders *mahēr'* and *chāsh* as adverbs, and the nouns *shālāl'* and *baz* as verbs. The Latin Vulgate in v. 1, retains the translation by adverbs, "Swiftly take away spoils; quickly prey," but in v. 3 substitutes verbs, rendering the inscription, "Quicken to take away spoils; hasten to prey." Now to-day, those verbs are generally regarded as participles; but there is nothing to decide whether the nouns are subjects or objects or accusatives of direction. So the inscription may be read:

"Speeding spoil, hastening booty," or  
 "Speeding [is] spoil, hastening [is] booty," or  
 "Speeding [to] spoil, hastening [to] booty."

The inscription, then, is indeed an enigma. It is only a warning about spoliation. It is not even announced as a name, though there is a hint that something personal is implied, for the preposition *l*, "for," is prefixed as in the Hebrew inscriptions on many seals. Delitzsch does not regard the phrase as a personal name at all, and follows Luzzatto in treating the preposition and verb, the *l* and *mahēr*, as the immediate future tense. He therefore renders the first two words of the inscription as "spoils



are about to be hastened.” As instances of such a construction he alleges *Genesis* xv. 12, *Joshua* ii. 5, and *Habbakuk* i. 17. But the *lābhô*, “to go,” of the first example, is the gerund formed by *l* with the construct infinitive, like the *lisgôr*, “to shut,” of the second, and the *lahăróg*, “to slay,” of the third. Then these are really examples of the gerund formed by *l* with the construct infinitive. But if *mahēr* is the construct infinitive of the Piel or intensive conjunction, and *l* forms a gerund with it, we ought to have *l* with *chûsh* instead of simple *chāsh*. Therefore, it is better to regard the *l* as signifying possession. On seals, it implies that the object sealed belongs to the person named, as *lzdnm* on Zidonian coins means “for the Zidonians.” So the inscription hints of a person bearing the inscription as a name.

The Massoretic text and the Latin Vulgate proceed, as if God continued to speak and say, “And let Me take Me faithful witnesses.” But the Greek Vulgate, the Aramaic Targum, and the Syriac Vulgate read a text with an imperative, “And do thou take.” That is to say, they read an initial *He*, sign of the perfect Hiphil or causative conjugation, where the Massoretes and St. Jerome read an initial *Aleph*, sign of the first person future. In both cases, the form is strengthened by a final or paragogic *He*, making it cohortative, “let me take” instead of “I shall take,” and “do thou take” instead of “take.”

Then men are named as faithful or firm witnesses. The word translated “faithful” or “firm” is the Niphal, that is, the passive or reflexive, participle of *āmān*, the verb played on in the announcement that those who do not believe shall not be established, vii. 9.

At this moment, therefore, Uriah the priest appears as a man good and reliable. Yet afterwards, he becomes the tool of Ahaz in transforming the ritual of Jehovah

into idolatrous rites, in removing the ancient bronze altar to set up an Assyrian one, and in altering the Temple structure, *2 Kings* xvi. 10-18. He is called the "priest," that is not the high-priest, but the *pākîd*, or overseer, who presided over the Temple services. So in *Jeremiah* xxix. 26, "Jehoiada the priest" was not the high-priest of that name. He, like his successor Zephaniah, was the "second priest" or *pākîd*; but Jehoiada the high-priest was succeeded by the high-priest Seraiah, *2 Kings* xxv. 18, and *Jeremiah* lii. 24. Through an error, therefore, Uriah is included by Josephus in a list of high-priests, *Antiquities*, X. viii. 6, though he is correctly omitted by the Chronicler, I. vi. 4-15.

The other witness, Zechariah, the son of Jeberechiah, has been the subject of many conjectures. He was certainly a man of sufficient importance to be called as witness in a matter of such public importance. At that time, the name belonged to an Asaphite, that is, to a man in one of the three guilds, that formed the Temple choir. Eight years later, in 727, he took part in the cleansing of the Temple under Hezekiah. Further, the father of Hezekiah's mother Abi, or Abijah, was named Zechariah, *2 Kings* xviii. 2, *2 Chronicles* xxix. 1. There is nothing, however, to identify the witness with either. Perhaps all we can say is that he is certainly not the prophet Zechariah, though their fathers have the same name, Berechiah being really the abbreviated form of Je-berechiah, "Jehovah blesses."

Having written his warning, and submitted it to the two witnesses, Isaiah returned home. He says:

viii. 3. And I approached the prophetess,  
And she conceived.

The wife of the prophet is called a prophetess. Many

have regarded the title as given her on account of her husband's office, but the peculiar nature of the prophetic gift hardly suggests such an idea. Analogy does not help us, for the priest's wife did not become a priestess, though the king's wife became a queen, and the Germans transfer the husband's title to the wife. In every other passage, where we meet the Hebrew word, it indicates some one moved, or claiming to be moved, by the prophetic spirit. Such was Miriam, *Exodus* xv. 20, Deborah, *Judges* iv. 4, Huldah, *2 Kings* xxii. 14, *2 Chronicles* xxxiv. 22, and Noadiah, *Nehemiah* vi. 14, unless indeed we follow the Greek Vulgate in reading this last name as masculine. And in the New Testament both the holy Anna, *Luke* ii. 36, and the unholy Jezebel, *Revelation* ii. 20, bear the title.

Nine months passed by ; and during this time, neither Tiglath-pileser III nor Ahaz was idle. The former had been ceaseless in warfare, ever since he seized the Assyrian throne on the thirteenth day of the month Iyyar, April-May, in the year 745, according to the Eponym Canon. Then he laid aside his name Pûlu, the "Pul" of *2 Kings* xv. 19, and assumed that of the great warrior who had reigned over Assyria from 1023 to 1000, that is, in the days of Saul, 1020 to 1000. In the month Tishri, September-October, he marched to Babylonia, and defeated the Aramæans, apparently led by the Kaldi or Chaldeans of southern and central Babylonia. In 744, he invaded the land of Namri, south of lake Urmia, and penetrated to the heart of Media. In 743, he captured Arpad in North Syria, having defeated a relieving army of Armenians under Sardurri II, who had assumed the title, "king of Suri," or North Syria. Many chieftains, including Rezin of Damascus and Hiram of Tyre, brought tribute to Tiglath-pileser at Arpad. As



soon as the conqueror withdrew, that city revolted. In the following year, he again besieged it; and in 740, it fell. While Tiglath-pileser was still busy in the north, Syria and Northern Phœnicia rebelled. In 738, the Assyrian king, for the first time, penetrated the interior of Syria, and, according to the Eponym Canon, "captured the city of the Kullanû," apparently the Calno of *Isaiah* x. 9, and to the north of Hamath. He then conquered Ya'di and nineteen districts of Hamath. Immediately, he received tribute from neighbouring princes, among whom we note Rezin of Damascus, Menahem of Samaria (as in 2 *Kings* xv. 19), and Hiram of Tyre. At the same time he placed Panammu, son of Bar-Tsur, on the throne of his fathers, over Ya'di and Sam'al or Samalha in Northwest Syria, and deposed the usurper Panammu, son of Qaral, who has left us the earliest known of Aramaic inscriptions on a statue of Hadad at Gerjin, near Zinjîrli. The letters are Phœnician, but cut in relief after the Hittite fashion, and they spell the success of Panammu son of Qaral through his gods Hadad, El, Resheph, Rekub-el and Shemesh, his insistence that his son shall sacrifice and pray to Hadad for his departed soul, and his menaces against anyone who may injure the memorial statue. But the new king, Panammu, son of Bar-Tsur, was a devoted vassal of the Assyrian king. Then by the deportation of 30,300 people, according to his own numbering, Tiglath-pileser initiated that policy of transporting conquered peoples to other lands, which would prove fatal to the Ten Tribes and a purifying furnace to the Two. In the following year, 737, he invaded Madâa, the land of the Medes; and between Media and Armenia, he subdued Barsua or Parsua, the ancient home of the Persians, east of lake Urmia. A year later, in 736, he was warring with Ararat, that is Armenia.



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And in 735, while Isaiah was urging Ahaz to faith in God, and warning him against an alliance with Assyria, Tiglath-pileser was laying waste 450 miles of Armenia round its uncaptured capital Dhuspas—that is, Van. Such was the career of the mighty soldier, the Napoleon of his day, who loomed large on the horizon, and seemed to Ahaz a shelter from the enemies round Jerusalem.

In the Second Book of *Kings*, xvi. 7-9, we read :

7. And Ahaz sent messengers  
To Tiglath-pileser, the king of Assyria,  
Saying, I am thy son and thy servant ;  
Ascend and save me  
From the hand of the king of Syria  
And from the hand of the king of Israel,  
Who [are] rising against me.
8. And Ahaz took the silver and the gold,  
Which was found in the House of the Lord  
And in the treasures of the House of the king,  
And sent a gift to the king of Assyria.
9. And the king of Assyria heard him.

While Ahaz was waiting for the coming of Tiglath-pileser, Isaiah was waiting for the birth of his own child. Early in 734, his wife the prophetess became a mother the second time, as he says :

And she bore a son ;  
And Jehovah said to me :

Call his name  
Mahēr-shālāl-chāsh-baz.

- viii. 4. For before the child shall know  
[How] to call "My father" and "My mother,"  
One shall bear away the wealth of Damascus  
And the spoil of Samaria.  
Before the king of Assyria.

Again, as in vii. 17, the prophet names the king of Assyria in a line that has no parallel, here as there gaining force and emphasis for his announcement.

As the name of Isaiah's elder son, Shear-yashûbh, "a remnant will return," foretold the future of Judah, the name of his younger son predicted the doom of Syria and Israel with their capitals, Damascus and Samaria, and their kings, Rezin and Pekah. It is to be noted that this judgment is imminent, and destined to arrive before the baby can attain articulate speech. Already, Tiglath-pileser, glad of an opportunity to interfere in the affairs of Syria, is marching to defend Ahaz. Yet the Judean king and his people may well pause to consider the issue of the alliance. That will be one meet for an unfaithful people; yet God will be faithful, as the prophet chants in another Immanuel song.

Jehovah, says the prophet, added to speak, that is, spoke again. In the first strophe or stanza, judgment is announced for "this people," whose refusal of the Shiloah or Siloam waters shall be avenged by the floods of the River, that is, of the Euphrates. It is not probable that the prophet is referring to the summer overflow of that stream or to the floods, common enough in both Assyria and Babylonia. The metaphor is more general, as Jeremiah, xlvii. 2, evidently understood it, when he adopted it after the battle of Carchemish in 604 B.C., to threaten the Philistines with an invasion of the Chaldeans, who had just under Nebuchadrezzar defeated the Egyptians. The prophet then spoke of waters ascending from the north, and becoming an overflowing stream to overflow the land and all its fulness.

Isaiah speaks of those who refused the slow and gentle stream from the only true spring in Jerusalem. That flowed from Gihon, the Fountain of the Virgin, west of



the Kidron and south of the Temple, through a rock channel overground down the Kidron Valley and through Mount Moriah to a pool in the Tyropœon or Valley of the Cheesemongers. Not many years later, and probably by Hezekiah, the tunnel of the Siloam inscription connected the Fountain with the Pool of Siloam. The waters in the days of Josephus, *Wars*, V, iv. 1, and the earlier Rabbis, were sweet and plentiful. On the last day of Tabernacles, "the great day of the Feast," *John* vii. 37, a priest filled a golden pitcher at the Fountain, and carried it to the Temple, where the water was poured out at the altar. To the Pool of Siloam, our Lord sent the man born blind, that he might wash his eyes and receive sight, *John* ix. 7. The Evangelist, in recording the sign, noted the significance of the name Shiloah or Siloam, "sent," for it suggested Him who was sent by the Father for the blessing of His people and the world, *John* iii. 17, viii. 42, xvii. 3. In flowing from the direction of Zion, the Temple Mount, in the quiet flow of its waters, and in its benefit to God's people, the stream suggested to Isaiah the very present help of Jehovah. Such was the thought of the Psalmist also, xlv. 4, 5, when he said of it:

A river—its canals gladden the city of God,  
The Sanctuary of the dwellings of the Most High.

God is in her midst; she will not totter;  
God will help her at the turning of morning.

But those waters were rejected by "this people," whoever "this people" may be. It seems most natural to interpret the expression as indicating the Jews, for they, and not Rezin and Pekah, abandoned Jehovah for Assyria. The words "this people," *hā'ām hazzélh*, occur ten times in Isaiah. The reference in the present case is disputed.

In ix. 16, they have "Israel" for antecedent, and therefore indicate the Ten Tribes, sometimes spoken of as Ephraim. In the remaining eight cases, they undoubtedly denote the Jews. We must, however, consider whether this meaning is consistent with the present context. For this it is necessary to translate the strophe.

- viii. 5. And again Jehovah  
Spoke to me further, saying :
6. Because that this people refused  
The waters of Shiloah, that [are] going gently,  
And [have] joy as to Rezin  
And the son of Remaliah ;
7. And therefore, behold the Lord,  
Bringing up upon them  
The waters of the River,  
[That are] strong and great—  
The king of Assyria  
And all his glory.

There were those who refused the Siloam stream, symbol of God's provision. They shall have the Euphrates in the person of Tiglath-pileser, Isaiah, as in vii. 17-20 and elsewhere, explaining his own metaphor. Surely this refers to the people of Jerusalem. There is, it is true, a difficulty in v. 6, in the reference to Rezin and Pekah. The latter, it will be noted by the way, is contemptuously described as the son of Remaliah, the usurper being treated as nameless and indicated as not of royal descent. In connection with Rezin and Pekah, joy is mentioned. The lines cannot mean "the joy of Rezin and Pekah," for the relation between joy and its possessor is expressed in every other case by *m'sôs*, the construct case of the word *māsôs*, joy, *Isaiah* xxiv. 8, 11; xxxii. 14; lx. 15; lxii. 5; *Ezekiel* xxiv. 25;

*Psalm* xlviii. 3; *Job* viii. 19; *Lamentations* v. 15. Therefore the lines cannot be translated, "And [they share] the joy of Rezin and Pekah."

The Hebrew phrase is *m'sôs 'ēth-R'tsîn*; and it is urged that *'ēth* means "with," so that we may render the words, "And [they have] joy with Rezin." But this is inconsistent with the Massoretic vowels, which were inserted sometime during our sixth and eighth centuries, and represent the word for "joy" as in the construct case. And the construct case does not appear to be used before *'ēth*, when it means "with," though it is used poetically and especially in the case of participles before other prepositions. The construct case, however, is used in *Jeremiah* xxxiii. 22, before *'ēth*, employed as the sign of the accusative. If, then, we treat that word in our present passage as indicating the object of the joy, we can attain a clear explanation by translating the couplet with Alexander as, "And [because there is] joy with respect to Rezin and the son of Remaliah." In that case, the passage tells us that this people of Jerusalem are rejoicing in the flight of Rezin and Pekah, but none the less the Assyrian, who marches to help, will overwhelm them.

It is unnecessary therefore to adopt the conjecture that the *Seyn* sibilants of *m'sôs* have supplanted similar and weaker *Sāmekhs*, and that *'ēth* has replaced *mipp'nē*, "from the face of." The supposed original reading would mean "to melt" or "to faint from the face of Rezin," that is, "on account of Rezin." Nor need we follow the Greek Vulgate, which offers only a free paraphrase, "but wish to have Rhassin and the son of Rhomelia king over you." This evidently suggested St. Jerome's rendering, "and have taken up rather Rasin and the son of Romelia." Both renderings suppose the Hebrew words to mean literally "And [have] joy with



Rezin." This, as we have seen, is inconsistent with the Massoretic pointing; and it is also against the unity of the song, which announces the offence and judgment in the first strophe, and the execution of the sentence in the second.

That second strophe or stanza describes the invasion of Judah, Immanuel's land, by the Assyrian, pictured as a flood.

And it will ascend over all its channels,  
And it will go over all its banks.

viii. 8. And it will glide into Judah:  
It has overflowed and will cross:  
It has reached unto [the] neck.

And the expansions of its wings will become  
The filling of the breadth of Thy land,  
Immanuel.

The last lines occasion a difficulty because of the phrase "the expansions of its wings." The Hebrew word for "expansions" is simply the participle of *nātāh'*, "extend," in the Hophal, the passive of the causative form. But the word for "wings" is not used of an army, nor of a river, though the former is asserted by Gesenius in his *Lexicon*, and the latter by Umbreit and Knobel, followed by Alexander in his *Commentary*. The figure therefore changes, the Assyrian army being now pictured, not as a river, but as a bird of prey. The sudden passage from one metaphor to another is striking, but as Whitehouse points out, it is characteristic of Isaiah. So in c. v. 29, 30, the advance of the enemy is described now as an invasion of lions, and now as a storm on the coast.

As to the name, Immanuel, it is written separately in most manuscripts, and is treated by some Rabbinic



writers as a sentence, "God [is] with us." So in v. 10, and concluding the third strophe, we shall again find it forming a line without a parallel. There, however, it is introduced by the conjunction "because," and must therefore mean "Because God [is] with us." But Isaiah, as we have already seen, treats the expressions Shear-yashubh, vii. 3, x. 21, 22, and Maher-shalal-hash-baz, viii. 1, 3, with a reference both to the meanings they connote and to the persons they denote. Further, since the expression, Immanu-El, like the title of the Assyrian king in vii. 17 and viii. 4, occupies a striking position in both strophes, there would seem to be more purpose in its use than simply to signify "God [is] with us." In the present case it follows the word for "thy land," and that could only be addressed to Ahaz or to Jehovah, or to one destined for the throne of Judah. It is not addressed to Ahaz, for it is contained in Jehovah's communication to Isaiah, vv. 5, 11. Jehovah certainly was owner of the land, xiv. 2, 25, xlvii. 6, but He is speaker here. In vii. 14, however, the prophet had announced the birth of the Virgin's Son, Immanuel; and in ix. 7, he will proclaim Him possessor of David's throne and kingdom. Besides, it is consistent with Isaiah's method of gradually unfolding a theme, that he should use the expression Immanu-El in this place to indicate what was implied in the possession of the name by the Child of vii. 14.

The land is Immanuel's land. In this lies the certainty of Divine protection. Therefore the people will not be wholly overwhelmed. The waters will indeed reach to the neck, that is, the personified nation will not be utterly destroyed. It is better so to retain the figure of one threatened with drowning than to suppose the unsubmerged head to be the elevated site of

Jerusalem, unswept by the tide of Sennacherib's invasion thirty-three years later, in 701.

Confident in Jehovah's providence, the prophet of Judah is inspired to chant his third strophe against Israel, Syria, Assyria, and all the enemies of God's people.

- viii. 9. Rage, peoples, and be dismayed :  
Give ear, all the far places of the earth.

Gird yourselves, and be dismayed :  
Gird yourselves, and be dismayed.

10. Counsel a counsel, and it will be nullified :  
Speak a word, and it will not stand.

Because "With-us-[is]-God."

The very first word is a subject of debate. The Targum and the Latin Vulgate regard it as accented on the last syllable, and therefore the Pual, the passive of the intensive form, of the verb *rā'āh* "to feed [a flock]." In that case, it would mean "Associate yourselves." But it is really the Qal or simple form of the double *Ayin* verb, "to rage," or "to be evil," or as the Syriac Vulgate implies here, "to tremble." The sentences are of course conditional, like the similar constructions in *John* ii. 19, "Dissolve this Sanctuary," and *Matthew* xxiii. 32, "Fill up the measure of your fathers." This is called the hypothetical imperative, of which Driver offers many examples in his *Hebrew Tenses*, § 152, for example, *2 Chronicles* xx. 20, "Trust in Jehovah, and prosper," and *Genesis* xlii. 18, "Do this, and live," as well as *Isaiah* lv. 2, 3, *Jeremiah* xxv. 5, xxxv. 15, *Amos* c. v. 4, 6, *Psalms* xxxvii. 27, *Proverbs* iii. 3, iv. 4, vi. 3, vii. 2, ix. 6, xiii. 20, xxiii. 19, xxvii. 11, *Job* xxii. 21, *1 Kings* xxii. 12, 15. Therefore the opening words mean, "If you

rage, you will be dismayed" or "dumbfounded." The Greek Vulgate, however, read the letter *Rêsh* as *Dáleth*, and rendered the word, not as "rage" but "know." In this it is followed by Secker, Lowth, Guthe, Cheyne, Marti, Condamin, and Box, who hold the latter word a truer parallel to the "Give ear" of the next line. But the first line announces judgment on the invaders, and the second calls the remotest lands to hear it. Then the girding signifies an arming against the City of God. And as to the counsel counselled, or the plan planned, it will be nullified, made nothing, this last word being the Hophal, the passive of the causative form, of the verb *pārár*, "to break."

The words of this third strophe or stanza recall those of the second Psalm :

1. Why did nations make a tumult?  
And peoples will meditate an empty thing.
2. The kings of earth will take their stand,  
And princes have sat in council together,  
  
Against Jehovah  
And against His Messiah.

The third strophe defied the enemies without. The fourth has regard to the cowards within. Even an "Athanasius against the world" may need warning against the feeble counsels of his few intimate friends and his own more intimate heart. Therefore God spoke to Isaiah, in the day of "the strength of the Hand," when "the Hand of the Lord was strong upon him," *Ezekiel* iii. 14, that is, when the prophet was inspired. Isaiah and his disciples are forbidden to join in the popular exclamations of "a conspiracy!" or to fear the popular objects of fear. They were bidden to sanctify



Jehovah, that is, to regard and treat Him as holy, and to hold Him for their sole object of fear.

viii. 11. For thus said Jehovah to me,  
In the strength of the Hand ;

And He instructed me, lest I should go  
In the way of this people, saying :

12. You shall not say, "Conspiracy," to all,  
[To] which this people shall say, "Conspiracy."

And you will not fear its Fear ;  
And you will not dread.

13. As to Jehovah of Hosts,  
You will sanctify Him ;

And He [will be] your Fear ;  
And He [will be] your Dread.

"Fear," of course, stands for the object of fear. And we have rendered the opening phrase of v. 12 as "you shall not say," because the future is strengthened by the letter *nûn*, and therefore requires "shall" instead of "will." The form is really a "future energetic," like that in Arabic, for which a Hebrew writer would ordinarily use the infinitive absolute followed by the finite verb. Further, we may note with Delitzsch, that the word "instructed" is the future of Qal, the simple form, and not the perfect of Piel, the intensive form, for the latter would require a *Páthach* or vowel *a* under the *Rêsh*.

The word for "conspiracy," *qésher*, was misread as *qāsheh*, "hard," by the Greek Vulgate. Secker, followed by Lowth, de Lagarde, Bickell in 1883, the Cheyne of 1884, and Loisy, would substitute *qōdesh*, "holy," de Lagarde, in his *Semitica* I. 15, arguing that the parallelism between the latter halves of vv. 12 and 13 would be matched by a parallelism between the former halves, if "holy" is read instead of "conspiracy," and Secker



defending the change by the mention of *miqdash*, "a sanctuary," in the next strophe, v. 14. But Duhm, the later Cheyne and Marti, following Delitzsch, rightly reject the conjecture. Indeed, the context contains nothing to suggest that Isaiah and his disciples were forbidden to co-operate in the religion of their own people.

Still there remains a difficulty regarding the reference of the word for "conspiracy." It certainly comes from the root "to bind," and so means such a confederacy of States as that of Israel and Syria against Judah, *Nehemiah* iv. 2, in Hebrew, or such a conspiracy of men against the throne, as that Athaliah denounced when she cried, "A conspiracy, a conspiracy," *2 Kings* xi. 14, *2 Chronicles* xxiii. 13. In the present instance, the prophet must not join the people when they raise that cry. Therefore it cannot imply such a charge of conspiracy by the prophet and his friends as that which had been made against Amos, vii. 10, nearly thirty years before. But the people were actually crying out against the confederacy of Israel and Syria. And so, as St. Jerome and St. Thomas of Aquin explained the passage, Isaiah and his disciples are warned not to follow their own people in regarding that confederacy as a conspiracy, an object of fear or an object of dread. They should look beyond the human instruments to the Divine cause. As Knabenbauer in his Latin Commentary, I. p. 208, happily expresses it, the prophet and his disciples should have the theocratic ideal before their eyes, and recognise God as the real agent. So it is written that in the days of Jotham, Jehovah began to send Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah against Judah, *2 Kings* xv. 37. Again, as to Ahaz, Jehovah his God gave him into the hand of the king of Syria, *2 Chronicles* xxviii. 5.

Isaiah and his disciples must sanctify and treat Jehovah as holy, trusting Him and avoiding sin. For *takdâshû*, "treat as holy," Duhm would substitute *takshîrû*, "treat as a conspirator." As this verb is not found in the Hiphil or causative form, Duhm issues a new word, and gives Isaiah credit for the coinage. And even were there the slightest ground for the alteration, it would be necessary to give the verb the sense of "treat as a confederate" or "ally," that is, to treat Jehovah as the only real ally in the world, this sense of the verb being found in *Nehemiah* iv. 2, according to the Hebrew reckoning.

Again, Duhm strikes out the word *miqdâsh*, "a holy thing" or "place," a "sanctuary," from the opening of the next strophe, on the ground that it does not accord with his view of the sense and the rhythm, and may be due to a misspelling and misplacement of the word *môqesh*, "a snare," at the end of the verse. In this Duhm is followed by Box and Condamin, though Whitehouse holds that such critical license overruns due bounds. Then de Lagarde would replace the Hebrew word for "sanctuary" by *miqqash*, said to mean "a stumbling-block," but quite new and unknown. It would be difficult to accept this word, with which de Lagarde has generously enlarged the resources of the Hebrew language, in view of the fact that the word rendered "sanctuary" is supported by the three Vulgates, Greek, Syriac, and Latin, and seems to have such a reference to "you will sanctify," as "fear" to "you will fear" and "dread" to "you will dread."

The fifth and last strophe of the chant proclaims Jehovah as a sanctuary, and therefore an asylum and refuge for the faithful, *Exodus* xxi. 14, 1 *Kings* i. 50, ii. 28, 1 *Maccabees* x. 43. But on the other hand He will be a scandal and stumbling-block to both houses of Israel, to

the Two Tribes and to the Ten. As to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, they will be trapped as in a snare for their faithlessness.

viii. 14. And He shall become a sanctuary  
 And a stone of collision  
 And a rock of stumbling  
 For the two houses of Israel,  
 A snare and a noose  
 For the dwellers of Jerusalem.

15. And they will stumble, many among them;  
 And they will fall; and be broken;  
 And they will be noosed and taken.

The parallels in the first couplet are antithetical, presenting a contrast. God's intervention is always an occasion for the self-manifestation of two classes, the faithful and the faithless, *John* iii. 18-21. As to the latter, Jehovah will be a stone, against which the foot strikes, and a rock to cause stumbling, so that they stumble, fall, and break. He will also be a fowler's snare, that is spread out and nets its prey, and a fowler's noose that ties it, so that they are noosed and taken. In this connection, the word "many," v. 15, is important. Numerous as the faithless and ruined may be, they are not "all," for a remnant will return, as Shear-yashubh, the name of Isaiah's elder son, has already signified, vii. 3, and as Isaiah himself will presently declare, x. 21.

We have rendered the word *bām* as "among them," the *b* meaning "in" and the *m* suffixed referring to the people, as the Greek and Latin Vulgates, Ewald, Nagelsbach,, Delitzsch, Reuss, Duhm, Guthe, Marti, and Condamin acknowledge, though Gesenius, Hitzig, Dillmann, and Cheyne, followed by Box, render the word as "against them" or "over them," and refer the word "them" to the



stone and the rock. As to the form *hāyáh l'*, "to be for," we have rendered it simply "become," as in the sentence, "And the man became a living soul," *Genesis* ii. 7. We may also note that v. 15 is repeated nearly word for word in *xxviii.* 13, and is referred to in *Luke* ii. 34; *Matthew* *xxi.* 44, and *Romans* ix. 33.

At that time, early in 734, Tiglath-pileser was on the march towards Syria. On his way lay Carchemish, the Jerablûs or Hierapolis on the west bank of the Euphrates, then the chief city of the Hittites, now only mounds of ruined walls and palaces in a rectangle half a mile long by a quarter of a mile broad. In the days of Saul, about 1020 B.C., the armies of Tiglath-pileser I had ravaged the district even to the gates of the city. The king Sangara fared even worse at Assyrian hands. About 880, he became a vassal of Asshur-natsirpal III, whose son, Shalmaneser II, captured his cities and exacted an enormous tribute. In the annals of Tiglath-pileser III, for 743 and 738 B.C., its king Pisisir is described as paying tribute to the Assyrian king. Now, in 734, as its overlord approaches, the great city may well be fearful, for the Hittite empire is weak from dissensions within and enemies without. After seventeen years, in 717 B.C., that empire will end, and Pisisir will surrender to Sargon II of Assyria. But at the present moment it trusts in its goddess Atárgatis. This name, represented as Derketo by the Greek historian Ctesias about 400 B.C., and as Tar'ata in Syriac and the Talmud, is a compound of the Assyrian Ishtar, corresponding to the Greek Aphrodite and the Latin Venus, with the Aramæan or Syrian 'Ata or Ati. The worship of this goddess, represented as a mermaid, held its ground in Haran as late as the fifth century A.D.; Herodotus, in 445 B.C., had spoken of its temple in Ashkelon, i. 105, and in 163 B.C. Judas Macca-



beus made a great slaughter at its city, Carnion of Gilead, 2 *Maccabees* xii. 26, the Ashtaroth-karnaim of *Genesis* xiv. 5. The protection of Atárgatis would avail Carchemish little now. Unhindered by his vassal city and its Hittite soldiery, the Assyrian king crosses the Euphrates into Syria.

From the districts of Ya'di and Sam'al, and from the city of Zinjîrli about 80 miles to the west from Carchemish, comes Panammu son of Bar-Tsur, full of gratitude to his benefactor Tiglath-pileser, and full of confidence in his gods. Of these the first was Hadad, Dadu or Dada, the Syrian sun-god, sometimes compounded, as in *Zechariah* xii. 11, with the Assyrian Rimmon or Ramman, the god of the thunder. Generally, Hadad was united as husband to Atárgatis and as father to Ben-Hadad. The second god was El, the primitive Semite name for God, the Mighty One, and a vestige of an original monotheism. The third was Rekhubb-El, the Chariot of God, or Rakkabh-El, the Charioteer of God, according to the way we point the consonants of the inscription. This god was the special patron of Panammu's family, being described as the Baal of the house, a phrase used to name a householder in *Judges* xix. 22, 23. And the fourth god was Shamash, the sun-god. Glad and confident came Panammu. Two years more, and he will die in his lord's camp before Damascus. Then his son Bar-Rekhubb will raise the Panammu memorial in the cemetery of Takhtaly Bunar at Zinjîrli. Meanwhile, to use the language of the inscription, he will run by the wheel of his lord, Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, in his camps from the sunrise or east to the sunset, while his patron conquers the four quarters of the world, and carries the daughters, that is, the peoples of the sunrise to the sunset, and those of the sunset to the sunrise.

Onward marches Tiglath-pileser, ravaging as he advances. About 60 miles south-west of Carchemish, he finds Arpad. It knew him well. Nine years before, in 743, as we have already learnt from the Eponym Canon in Assurbanipal's library, he had captured that city. On his withdrawal in the same year, it revolted, only to find itself besieged the next year, 742, and taken in 740. They may watch him as he passes, bowing themselves, these beardless, yellow-skinned men from Cappadocia, showing their black eyes and pigtails, their retreating brows and large upper jaws. Their right arm hangs bare and free over the tunic and the closely fitted shirt; and their feet are very prominent because of the long upturned toes that survive the snow-shoes of the Taurus range. Gods and goddesses they had enough—at least a thousand, and these distinguished by mural crowns and the high-pointed hat of royalty. Chief among the idols were such as did not witness to a lofty code, for they were Tarkhu the goddess, wife of Ro or Sutekh, the sky-god, and mistress of Sanda the sun-god.

Soon another stage is reached at Kullani, the Calno of *Isaiah* x. 9. This had been the headquarters of his enemies and the objective of Tiglath-pileser's operations in 738, when he marched to conquer the nineteen little States of the Hamath district, then united under Azriyau of Yaudi, in North Syria. Now as then, the Hittite inhabitants of Calno are as reeds before the Assyrian flood.

Onward Tiglath-pileser advances to Qarqar. In 854, Shalmaneser II had there defeated Ben-Hadad of Damascus and Ahab of Samaria. Now again, it is against the cities of Damascus and Samaria, and their kingdoms of Syria and Israel, an Assyrian king is marching.

About half-way between Carchemish and Damascus, and nearly a hundred miles south of Arpad, he reaches Hamath on the Orontes. About 1000 B.C., when the Aramæan kingdoms were rising in Syria because Assyria and Egypt were too occupied with their own troubles to interfere, Hamath was the seat of Toi, the foe of Damascus and the ally of David, 2 *Samuel* viii. 10. About 960 B.C., Solomon built store-cities in the district to collect grain from North Syria, 2 *Chronicles* viii. 4. About a hundred years later, in 854, Shalmaneser II, as he himself tells us, marched from Assyria, devastating North Syria. Then he won his victory at Qarqar, as we have seen. There he defeated Irchulêni, the king of Hamath, with his allies, Ben-Hadad II of Damascus, Ahab of Israel, Ba'asa of the Ammonites, and eight others. Hamath afterwards came under the influence of Judah, but was seized and partly devastated by Jeroboam II of Israel about 810 B.C., 2 *Kings* xiv. 28.

About 760 B.C., Amos, vi. 1, 2, had cried to the idlers of Jerusalem and to the careless in Samaria, bidding them consider the fate of Calneh—that is, Calno or Kullani, not the Calneh of *Genesis* x. 10, near the Tigris, but that we found near Arpad. Then he calls them to note the condition of Hamath the Great, that they may picture their own future. Now as Tiglath-pileser, in this year 734, approaches, there are Israelite exiles in the region, *Isaiah* xi. 11, over which Eni-îlu or Eniel reigns. The Assyrian descends through the “entrance of Hamath” at the northern end of the broad valley between the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon. As he marches along the trade-road through the valley, he meets no resistance. The land lies before him. Four years hence, he will seize and depopulate the country; but for the present it lies at his feet.



A march of fifty miles southward brings Tiglath-pileser to Riblah. He is drawing dangerously near Jerusalem and its foes. Only a hundred miles separate him from Dan, and only sixty-five from Damascus. Watered by a mountain stream, the town of Riblah lies in a wide rich plain on the road between the Nile and the Euphrates. Here the fierce Assyrian may rest a moment as the Egyptian Pharaoh Necho will do in 605, when he marches against Nebuchadrezzar, and as Nebuchadrezzar will do in 586, when he marches against Jerusalem.

Tiglath-pileser advances; and about thirty-five miles from Damascus, he enters Baalbek. The name is derived from Baal and the Semitic root *baku*, "to weep." So in his *Syrian Stone-lore*, p. 70, urges Conder, who points out that Mecca was originally Bekka, and connects both Baalbek and Mecca with Bacchus. This god of unrestrained weeping and laughter was originally a sun-god, the Sumerian Dumu-zi or "son of life," the Babylonian Tammuz, known in Canaan as Adhônay, "my lord," and passing hence to the Greeks as Adonis. For it the Northern Israelites planted the "gardens of Adonis," of which we have read in *Isaiah* i. 29. And at the sun's imaginary death in winter, the women wailed. The women of Gebal, north of Sidon, bewept Tammuz in spring time, when they saw the river Adonis red with marl that looked like blood. At Babylon, they wept on the second day of the month Tammuz, corresponding nearly to our June. Wright, in his *Zechariah*, p. 393, has shown that such mourning cannot be identified with that in *Zechariah* xii. 11; nor can it be the same as that threatened in *Amos* viii. 10. Yet the cult actually penetrated Jerusalem, *Ezekiel* viii. 14. And Sayce, in *Hastings' Dictionary*, iv. 677, thinks *Jeremiah* xxii. 18 formed the refrain of the weepers, whose *ai-lênû*,



"woe to us," passed from Phœnicia to Greece as *ailinon* and the mythical Linos.

It is open to question whether Tiglath-pileser saw the great temples, that afterwards made Baalbek famous as Heliopolis, or the City of the Sun. Conder, in his *Syrian Stone-lore*, p. 244, in spite of Muhammadan legends which attribute the buildings to Solomon, accepts the assertions of the inscriptions that they were due to Antoninus Pius and the Empress Julia Domna. Thomson, however, in the *Land and the Book*, p. 234, points to the huge substructures and to the massive marble blocks, more than sixty feet long by twelve feet square; and he insists that they "can scarcely be of a later age than that of Solomon." He even suggests that they may have "supported a magnificent edifice in the time of Joshua." For after twenty-five years of travel and study in the district, he was satisfied that Baalbek was the Baal-gad of *Joshua* xi. 17, xii. 7, and xiii. 5.

Thirty-five miles would lead Tiglath-pileser to Damascus. This city, then enclosed by walls about four miles in circumference, lay on the south of the Abanah river, now the Barada or "cool," which rises near Baalbek and flows to Damascus from the limestone hills on the north. From the Hermon ridge on the west the plain is watered by the Pharpar, now the Aw'aj or "crooked." The south is protected by the mountains Aswad and Mâni'; and the east by three marshy lakes and a low range of hills. The king of Damascus and that Syrian region, Rezin or Rezon, known to the Assyrians as Ra-sun-nu, had sent presents to Tiglath-pileser III in 738, on the failure of the Hamathite league against Assyria. Now he himself has been forming a similar coalition, into which he would force even Ahaz, the friend of the great warrior. Certainly he has ground for fear, and may

well shut himself up within his walls. Next year, Tiglath-pileser will return to besiege him. But now, apparently satisfied by the picture of his helpless and cowed condition, the Assyrian forces leave him on their left hand, and move straight on to the northern tribes of Northern Israel.

Down through the Valley of the Lebanon with the snowy ridge of Hermon on their left, they fall upon the sunny lands of Naphtali. Then they push south-westward to the olive groves and vineyards in the valleys of Zebulun. So it is said in 2 *Kings* xv. 29 :

In the days of Pekah, king of Israel,  
Came Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria,  
And took Ijon and Abel-beth-Maachah  
And Janoah and Kedesh and Hazor  
And the Gilead and the Galilee,—  
All the land of Naphtali—  
And deported them to Assyria.

So Galilee, the *Gālil* or the circuit, the northern portion of what was afterwards known as Galilee, became a prey. Here were the twenty towns Solomon had given the Tyrian Hiram, so that the district was subject the more to Phœnician influences, these becoming more powerful still when the Tyrian Jezebel became Ahab's queen. Through the land passed the great caravan road that came from Damascus across the Jordan below the Waters of Merom, and past Chorazin and Capernaum on the left, down to the north-west of the Sea of Galilee. Then it traversed the shore as far as Magdala, from which it went inland to Tabor and Jezreel, Nazareth and Nain being a few miles to the right. To the towns of the region came merchants, attracted by its wealth in oil, wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, honey and flax,

as well as cattle, sheep, and fowl. No wonder then it became known as Galilee of the Nations.

As Tiglath-pileser came, he seized town after town on his road. At once falls Ijon, at the very entrance to the Holy Land, and built on a plateau, now named Merj 'Ayyûn, the "meadow of springs." Abel-beth-Maachah, "the meadow of the house of Maachah," to-day "the meadow of wheat," lay a little to the west of Dan, that marked the northern as Beersheba the southern point of the Holy Land. Both Abel-beth-Maachah and Janoah in its neighbourhood are depopulated. Now there waits Kedesh, "a holy place," distinguished from other holy places as Kedesh in Galilee and as Kedesh-Naphtali. It is a city of refuge, *Joshua* xx. 7, and belongs to the Gershom family of Levites, *Joshua* xxi. 32. There in ancient days, about 1170 B.C., Barak had ruled, and the warriors of Naphtali and Zebulun had gathered to battle with Sisera, *Judges* iv. 6, 10. Neither its religious nor its historical associations, nor its happy situation in a plain surrounded by wooded hills, can avail it now. Hazor, in its neighbourhood on the west of Merom, falls captive next. A little more, and the Assyrian reaches the great caravan road, the "Way of the Sea." He crosses the river into the land "across the Jordan," *Isaiah* viii. 23, in *Hebrew*. That district, lying between the Waters of Merom and the Sea of Galilee, is here called Gilead, that name being extended, as in *Joshua* xxii. 9, to include all the land east of the Jordan from Hermon to the Arnon, and not merely that between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Then, having ravaged and depopulated this district south-east of the Merom Lake, Tiglath-pileser marches along the "Way of the Sea," past Tabor to Jezreel, from which he may cross the Plain of Jezreel, the Greek Plain of Esdraelon, and passing



Megiddo, reach the road that leads to the Philistine sea-coast.

Who can say what such events meant to the people of Judah? True, those calamities had befallen their enemies. None the less, both Naphtali and Zebulon were Hebrew tribes, descended from Jacob and capable of membership in the Commonwealth of Israel. The cloud over the north cast a deep shadow over the south. And even in Zion, the very place God had chosen for the special manifestation of Himself, the men were so alarmed in mind and so apostate in heart that they took refuge in spiritism. Isaiah had warned them of the perils the Assyrian alliance would involve, but as yet he is not vindicated by the voice of the people, too panic-stricken to judge sanely.

It is a moment of utter hopelessness. The Face, that is, the Grace of God, is hidden; the people will not listen; and so the prophet, in his first strophe, says to one:

viii. 16. Bind thou up testimony:

Seal instruction among my disciples.

17. And I shall wait for Jehovah,

Who conceals His Face from the House of Jacob.

And I shall expect Him—

18. Behold, I and the children,

Whom Jehovah has given me

For signs and portents in Israel.

[This is] from Jehovah of Hosts,

Who dwells in the mountain of Zion.

The command to bind up testimony as a papyrus or parchment roll, and to seal instruction as a closed document, is given by the prophet, not by God, because the first person in the remaining lines clearly refers to Isaiah. The prophet would say there is no room at this



moment for a public announcement of the prophetic theme. As to the word for "bind up," that cannot be absolute infinitive, so the word for "seal" in the parallel line ought not to be treated and pointed as absolute infinitive, though that is one of Duhm's "brilliant conjectures," blindly adopted by Condamin and hesitatingly commended by Skinner. Nor can we, with Barnes in the *Churchman's Bible*, render the words as "The testimony binds up, the law seals my disciples," and interpret them as signifying the safety of the faithful remnant, for each of the nouns is feminine and each of the verbs masculine. As to Isaiah's sons, Shear-yashubh and Maher-shalal-hash-baz bear prophetic names, announcing the return of the Jewish exiles and the speedy spoiling of Damascus and Samaria. Signs and portents they are, as Isaiah himself will become in a more remarkable manner when he will witness for three years against Egypt and Ethiopia. Further, it ought to be noticed that the expression "signs and portents" is frequent in *Deuteronomy*. It is found in iv. 34, vi. 22, vii. 19, xxvi. 8, xxix. 2 (Hebrew reckoning), xxxiv. 11. And there too had been drawn the picture of Zion as God's dwelling-place, xii. 5, 11, 18, 21; xiv. 23; xv. 20; xvi. 2, 6, 11; xvii. 8; xxvi. 2.

The names of Isaiah's sons, and indeed his own also, "Salvation of Jehovah," are prophetic. As they are directly so, they do not illustrate the typical sense of Holy Scripture. Beyond the literal sense, in which the words, whether prosaically or figuratively, speak of persons or events, there is the typical sense, in which those persons or events, in some particular, prophesy of other persons and events; as Moses, David, and Solomon, each in some special feature, prefigured our Lord. But Isaiah's sons are signs and portents through their names,

these being literally prophetic of Jerusalem's Restoration and Samaria's Fall. But while the words, literally understood, told of Isaiah and the children God had given him, Isaiah and his children, typically understood, foretold of our Lord, and of those faithful ones who would be delivered from the power of Satan and see the spoiling of their spiritual enemies, *Hebrews* ii. 13.

Then the prophet speaks of those who take refuge in spiritism.

- viii. 19. And because they will say to you ;  
 Inquire of the spiritists and the knowing ones,  
 Who twitter and mutter—  
 Will not a people inquire of its God ?  
 Will they inquire for the living of the dead ?  
 20. To instruction and to testimony !  
 If they will not speak according to this word,  
 [Each is a man] for whom is no dawn.

The people had rejected instruction and testimony. To these, bound up and sealed as they were, the prophet appeals. But the people, who would not retain God in their knowledge, turned to spiritists, that is, to persons possessed by an *'ôbh*, a familiar spirit or demon, *Leviticus* xx. 27, 1 *Samuel* xxviii. 8, and sought "knowing ones" or wizards, although the penalty of death had been enacted against those who indulged in such practices, *Deuteronomy* xviii. 11, *Leviticus* xix. 31, xx. 6, as Saul recognised in his own legislation, 1 *Samuel* xxviii. 9.

Some, following Oettli and Marti, would render two of the lines in this fashion :

Will not a people inquire of its ghosts,  
 Of the dead for the living ?

The words are regarded, then, as forming part of the

apostates' speech; Elōhîm is explained as "ghosts" instead of "God." But the new translation has nothing in its favour except the word of the witch, 1 *Samuel* xxviii. 13, "I saw a god ascending from the earth"; and the older interpretation, found in the Greek and Latin Vulgates, is retained not only by Delitzsch but even by Box. Grotius indeed, followed by Condamin, would render the sentences, "Ought not a people to consult its gods?" That would imply familiar spirits and departed souls were the gods of Israel; and certainly an argument based on such a supposition could hardly be addressed to the contemporaries of Isaiah. In the last couplet, it is better to retain the usual meaning of "if" than to follow Kimchi, Abrabhanel, Ewald, and others in explaining the "if not" as "surely" in the ordinary elliptical form of an oath.

The third strophe takes up the case of the man for whom there will be no dawn, and pictures him as he passes through the devastated land. The last line we translated therefore gives us the subject of the first line before us; and the reference of the word *bāh*, "in it," to the land is given by the verb "he will cross."

viii. 21. And he will cross in it,  
Hardpressed and hungry.

And it will be that he will hunger,  
And he will be enraged.

And he will curse by his king and by his God,  
And he will turn upward.

22. And he will look to earth,  
And behold stress and darkness,

O'ercloud and compression,  
And [he] thrust out into a fog.

In the third couplet, many, following the Greek and



Latin Vulgates and Symmachus, translate the first line as, "And he will curse his king and his God," as if the sentence was equivalent to that in the charge against Naboth, that "he blasphemed God and king," 1 *Kings* xxi. 13. But there the verb is the Piel or intensive form of *bārākh*, "to bless," used in that form euphemistically of cursing, and here it is the Piel of *qālāl*, "to be light" or "slight," used in that form of cursing with the object cursed in the accusative, *Genesis* viii. 21, xii. 3; *Exodus* xxi. 17; *Leviticus* xix. 14, xx. 9—the object invoked having "b," "in," prefixed. The full construction is found in 1 *Samuel* xvii. 43, "The Philistine cursed David by his gods." And therefore, following Delitzsch, we render the Isaian words, "by his king and by his God." Apostate as he is, the name of his king and that of his God serve him now only as expletives to garnish an oath.

In the final line of the strophe, the word for "thrust out" is the masculine participle of the Pual, the passive of the intensive form. It therefore refers to the man. The noun is feminine and the same word as that translated "thick" in "thick darkness," properly "darkness of obscurity," or "dense darkness" or "fog," in *Exodus* x. 22. The whole Isaian phrase is expanded and made clear by Jeremiah, xxiii. 12:

Therefore their way will be to them as slippery places  
in the fog:

They shall be thrust out, and fall in it.

The next strophe repeats two words, represented by "stress" and "o'ercloud," in kindred forms, here represented by "distress" and "overcloud," and begins a theme of Restoration. Speaking in the "prophetic past" tense to picture the fulfilment of his words more vividly, the prophet tells how Jehovah will honour the land He

has slighted in permitting Tiglath-pileser to waste it. To her, that is the land, there will be no overcloud in the time to come.

viii. 23. For [there will] not [be] overcloud  
For her, for whom was distress.

As at the former time, He slighted  
The land of Zebulon  
And the land of Naphtali.

And at the latter [time] He honoured  
The Way of the Sea,

[The land] beyond Jordan,  
Galilee of the nations.

## CHAPTER IX

As he is wont to do, Isaiah will now fill in the picture he has just outlined in a few strokes. And it was in the hour of gloom, when the northernmost districts had been devastated, and while the Assyrian hosts were poised to swoop on more southern places, the prophet chooses, or rather, is chosen, to chant another Immanuel song. Yet it will be 734 years and 29 years, 763 in all, before Messiah, near the close of His Galilean ministry, will visit those northern districts to manifest His glory. Then Cæsarea Philippi, in the region devastated by Tiglath-pileser III, will hear the promise to St. Peter, and Hermon will see Moses and Elijah, representatives of Law and Prophecy, attend the transfigured Messiah. In that day, the North of Israel and the South will be one in the blessings of Immanuel's presence. Then the Psalmist, standing on Mount Zion, sees the snowy peak of Hermon, the "sacred," to the north of Naphtali, and the green dome of Tabor to the south of Zebulun, and hears them shout for joy, *Psalm lxxxix. 12.*

But at the moment when Isaiah was writing, the prominent figure in the north of Israel was the Assyrian soldier with his conical cap, his thick mantle, and his high boot, wide open in front and held by straps. He is imagined as carrying a yoke for his captive, for whom it would be "the yoke of his burden," that is, his burdensome yoke. He lifts a staff to smite the enslaved shoulder. He holds also a *shébbhet*, or rod, or rather a club, two or three feet long and studded with iron nails.



He is a "driver" of slaves, an exactor or taskmaster; and in the word for "driver" and in that for "burden," there is a suggestion of the Egyptian bondage, *Exodus*, c. v. 6, ii. 11.

The figure would loom large through the mist of rumour. Tales would be told of captives impaled round besieged cities, and of the ruin wrought by terrible battering-rams and by archers of prodigious strength. The very chariot din and the martial tramp would seem audible across the sixty miles or so between Megiddo and Jerusalem.

Gloom rested on the region; and so dense was the darkness that Northern Israel seemed the land of the shadow of death, a place where death itself had cast its shadow. Delitzsch, like De Dieu and Fürst, would conjecture another reading, *tsalmûth*, "shadow," for *tsalmāweth*, "the shadow of death." There is no advantage, but a loss in the suggested alteration, which is opposed by Nöldeke, armed with the Greek, Syriac, and Latin Vulgates and the Aramaic Targum.

But now the prophet foresees a battle like that in the day of Midian, the expression, "the day of Midian," being used adverbially of time, and referring to the battle in which Gideon and his three hundred men routed the Midianites, foes of God's purpose and people, *Judges* vii. 22, viii. 12. That victory, nearly 400 years before Isaiah's prophecy, presented a great parallel to the manifestation of Messiah in Galilee, 761 years after this prophetic ode, for it was emphatically a revelation of Divine power. So *St. Matthew* iv. 12, 13, saw the fulfilment of these words in the day when Jesus, "having heard that John was delivered up, withdrew into Galilee; and having left Nazareth, he came and dwelt at Capernaum, the seaside [town] in the borders of Zabulon

and Nephthalim." After the Messianic triumph, the raiment of the foe will lie in heaps for burning; and the Messianic blessings follow. A note of the Messianic kingdom is its expansion to the limits of the world, through the admission of the nations to the nation, *Isaiah* xxvi. 15, lxvi. 23; *Zechariah* xiv. 9. This multiplication of the nation is the magnifying of its joy, according to the couplet in v. 2, addressed to God,

Thou didst multiply the nation :  
For it Thou didst magnify the joy.

The parallel is complete, and there is no need to abandon the Massoretic *gôy*, the Greek Vulgate *laou*, the Latin Vulgate *gentem*, the English "nation," in favour of *gîlāh*, "exultation," suggested by Krochmal and others. Further, as the Greek and Syriac Vulgates and the Aramaic Targum have no negative, we may well follow the Massoretic text in explaining *lō'* not as "not," but as *lô*, "for it." The position of the word before the verb is no objection to its being regarded as a pronoun, if we consider the order of the words in *Leviticus* vii. 7-9, 1 *Samuel* ii. 3, *Isaiah* xlv. 24, *Psalms* vii. 13, cxxxix. 17, and *Job* xxix. 21. Indeed, Briggs seems somewhat arbitrary when he says in his *Messianic Prophecy*, p. 199, that the *lô*, "for it," would be "in an unnatural position, and apparently superfluous to the sense and the rhythm." Further, if we may include the passage under discussion, there are eighteen places in which the *lō'*, of the text is merely another spelling of *lô*, "for it": *Exodus* xxi. 8, *Leviticus* xi. 21, xxv. 30, 1 *Samuel* ii. 3, 2 *Samuel* xvi. 18, 2 *Kings* viii. 10, *Isaiah* ix. 3, xlix. 5, lxiii. 9, *Psalms* c. 3, cxxxix. 16, *Proverbs* xix. 7, xxvi. 2, *Job* vi. 21 (according to some manuscripts), xiii. 15, xli. 4, *Ezra* iv. 2, 1 *Chronicles* xi. 20.

As to the joy, it will be "before Thee," that is, before God, like the joy at sacrificial feasts, *Deuteronomy* xii. 7, xiv. 26, and xvi. 11, and like the joy in the harvest. With regard to this last phrase, we note that the word for "joy" grammatically is in the construct case, the temporal expression "in the harvest" being a virtual genitive, as Delitzsch observes. And as Alexander saw, the preceding verse, in the phrase "the dwellers in the land," affords another instance of the same construction. The harvest itself demands more serious attention. The joy of it is a frequent figure, as in *Psalms* iv. 8, cxxvi. 5, 6, and *Jeremiah* xlviii. 33. But it was also a time of solemn festivity. It began about the middle of April with the waving of the first barley sheaf before the Lord on the morrow after the Sabbath in Passover week, for example, on the first Easter Sunday, *Leviticus* xxiii. 11. It lasted seven weeks till Pentecost, the "fiftieth" day, the "feast of harvest," *Exodus* xxiii. 16, the "feast of weeks," *Deuteronomy* xvi. 10, when the people should offer two loaves of fine flour, as they did literally in the Temple, and antitypically, according to the fulfilment of the type, in the Upper Room on that Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended to form the Church both of Jews and of Gentiles. Then, indeed, came the harvest of the Old Dispensation and its joy. Then also came the fall of paganism and the victory over the powers of evil. This is pictured by Isaiah as the heaping of the Assyrian armour for burning. As fuel for fire, lies not merely every weapon, but even the raiment of the soldiers down to the very boots. There is the shoe of him who shod himself with the clatter and rattle of the battle-field. There is the military cloak rolled in blood, suggesting the last agony of its owner, as he rolled from side to side in his own blood.



Two of the words have occasioned some discussion. That rendered "shoe," *s'ôn*, is explained as *shā'ôn*, "din," by the Syriac Vulgate, as "plundering" by the Latin Vulgate, and as "receiving" by the Aramaic Targum. These meanings are impossible, because the object is something that can be burnt. The Greek Vulgate explained it as a "mantle." But Kimchi, relying on the analogy of the Targumic word *sên*, a "shoe," suggested that it really means a shoe. This is confirmed by the Aramaic *zûn* and the Syriac *sāûn*, a "shoe," and still more by the Assyrian *shênu*, a "shoe," perhaps the high military boot. The word for "shoeing himself" is a denominative from that for "shoe"; and as it is the active, and not the passive participle, it must, as Delitzsch acknowledges, mean "shoeing himself" rather than "booted" or "shod."

The word for "rolled," a participle in the Poal or passive intensive form, hints a striking figure, which is lost in the conjectured reading of some who undertake to rewrite these prophecies. Bachmann, followed by Condamin, and suggesting greater alterations to Cheyne, would substitute the word for "polluted," a Pual or passive intensive participle found in *Malachi* i. 7, 12.

Now we may read the stanza or strophe as a whole.

- ix. 1. The people, who [were] walking in the darkness,  
Saw a great light.

The dwellers in the land of the shadow of death—  
Light shone upon them.

2. Thou didst multiply the nation :  
For it Thou didst magnify the joy.

They joyed before Thee,  
Like the joy in the harvest.

Like as [men] will exult  
In their dividing spoil.

3. For the yoke of his burden,  
And the staff of his shoulder,

The club of him who [was] driving him—  
Thou hast shattered [them] as [in] the day of Midian.

4. For every shoe of [him who was] shoeing [himself] with  
clatter,  
And mantle rolled in blood—

And it will be for burning,  
Food of fire.

The word “for” introduced the reasons for the joy. In v. 3, we read how the burdens of the enslaved were shattered. In v. 4, we were told how the ensigns of the enslaver were burnt. Now, “for” is prefixed to the second stanza, which will unveil the perfect cause of the joy, the Deliverer Himself, the past tense, the “prophetic perfect,” being used to present the fulfilment of the prediction more vividly.

- ix. 5. For a bairn has been born to us :  
A son has been given to us.

And the pryncedom has been on His shoulder ;  
And [one] called His Name—

Wonder, Counsellor,  
God, Mighty One,

Father of Eternity,  
Prince of Peace.

6. To the multiplication of the pryncedom  
And to peace—there is no end—

Upon the throne of David  
And upon His kingdom

To confirm it  
And to support it

In judgment and in justice  
From now and unto eternity.

The zeal of Jehovah of Hosts will do this.

We have retained the forms "Father of Eternity" and "Prince of Peace," for the sake of picturesqueness, though the Hebrew is really equivalent to our "Eternal Father" and "Peaceful Prince." We have also used the word "bairn" for "child" to preserve the assonance of the Hebrew *yélēd*, "child," and *yúllad*, "born." The child is born "to us," that is, to the faithful remnant surviving the calamities; and in the word we see a reference to the child's name Immanu-El, God with us. Isaiah is here developing and filling in the outline hinted in vii. 14, though the picture will not be seen in its fullness till the Angel tells the shepherds, "To-day a Saviour is born to you," *Luke* ii. 11. Further, the word for "princedom" is found twice in this stanza, and only here. But the word is clearly formed from the same root as "Israel" and "Sarai," that is, from *sārāh*, connected with *sārār* and *sûr*, to "arrange" or "rule," and means dominion or princedom. This princedom is said to be upon Immanuel's shoulder, not as the enemy's rod on the shoulders of the people, but whether as a sceptre or royal robe is subject to dispute. In any case, it is a symbol of authority, as the long wooden key of the house of David, borne at a later time on Eliakim's shoulders, was the symbol of his authority as overseer to shut and open, xxii. 22.

As to Messiah's name, it is given in vii. 14 by His Mother. Here the verb with conversive *waw* is simply "and he called," that is, "they," taken indefinitely, or "one" has done so. Or we may follow the Greek, Syriac, and Latin Vulgates in pointing the consonant *wayyiqqārē*, instead of *wayyiqrā*, and in rendering the word "he has



been called.” The names are evidently not proper names, but descriptions of the Child’s character, nature, and office. They cannot be the names of God the Father, though the Aramaic Targum, followed by Rashi and Kimchi, tries to make the lines mean that God, who is called Wonder, Counsellor, God, Mighty One, Father of Eternity, has called the child Prince of Peace. But it is easy to show by examples that the name which follows the word for “his name” is the name of the object and not of the subject, of the person receiving a name and not of the person conferring one, as for instance in *Genesis* iii. 20, iv. 25, xvi. 15, xxi. 3; 1 *Samuel* i. 20, *Ruth* iv. 17, and many other places. The word for “wonder” is that used of the miracles in Egypt, as in *Exodus* xv. 11, where Jehovah is described as “doing miracle” or “wonder.” It is employed to name the Angel, who predicted Samson’s birth to Manoah, *Judges* xiii. 18; and with full reason it is used of Him whose Conception was the Incarnation of God. The Massoretic pointing does not permit us to join the word with that which follows; so the line means “Wonder, Counsellor.” The pointing is justifiable, because the other renderings “Counselling wonderful things” and “Wonder of a Counsellor,” would, as Delitzsch points out, be rather expressed by the Hiphil or causative form of “to be wonderful” with the noun “counsel,” and this Delitzsch might have supported by a reference to the construction in xxviii. 29, where the ideas of “wonder” and “counsel” are connected in the phrase “wonderful in counsel.” As to the expression rendered “God, Mighty One,” we follow St. Jerome in reading these names separately as well as those in the preceding line. The two names are indeed closely connected, as in x. 21, where they are applied to God, and as in *Deuteronomy* x. 17, *Jeremiah*

xxxii. 10, and *Nehemiah* ix. 32, where each word has the article and the same reference to God, the full phrase being "the God, the great, the mighty." As to the expression, "the Father of Eternity," we may at once, with Whitehouse, dismiss the alternative rendering "Father of booty" as most improbable. It is true, the word translated "booty" has that meaning in *Genesis* xlix. 27, *Isaiah* xxxiii. 23, and *Zephaniah* iii. 8. But in such phrases as that before us the word "Father" does not mean possessor; the word rendered "eternity" or "booty" means "eternal" in the genitive position, for example in xlv. 17, lvii. 15; and as Skinner says, "the ideas of fatherhood and booty form an unnatural association."

In the Hebrew expression rendered "for the increase of the principdom," it is better, with Delitzsch, to take the word *marbêh* "increase," as an infinitive noun expressing abstract action or its actual result, rather than the participle of the Hiphil or causative form. In any case, it is in the construct form; and it matters little whether it means "to increase" or "for the increase of," though no doubt the latter meaning is suggested by the expression "and for peace" which follows. It may be noted that the *m* in *marbêh* is in the final form of the letter. The Talmud, in the tract *Sanhedrin*, 94a, quotes Bar-Kappara as saying that the *m* was closed because Hezekiah, ordained to be the Messiah, was found unworthy. But the tract *Sopherim*, 7, asserts that the word with its preposition was originally written as two words *lm rbh*, so that the *m* was properly in the final form. Twenty-five manuscripts, however, spell the word with *m* in the medial form; and it is safer to follow their lead than to adopt Bar-Kappara's explanation, or to assume that the *lm* has been written by dittography

of the *lm*, really *lwm*, at the end of the *shālôm*, "peace," concluding the previous verse.

This great prophecy is sealed with the words,

The zeal of Jehovah of Hosts will do this,

just as in i. 20, the prophet concludes with the sentence,

For the Mouth of Jehovah has spoken it,

in both cases the single line leaving an impression of intensity and earnestness.

The word *qináh*, "zeal," implies an idea comparable with that of God's wrath. In neither case is there disturbance or any change in God Himself. But in the latter instance the decree of vengeance, or the vengeance itself, or the state of one who has reason to fear vengeance, is described as the Wrath of God, for so it appears from the standpoint of the guilty. In the same way, Jehovah's zeal is an anthropomorphic way of regarding God's decree or His activity in relation to Israel; and it may be pictured as a ruddy glow of love for Israel and of anger against all that would deceive or oppress that people. The unused root of the word would mean "to become red," and in the Piel or intensive form, "to be jealous," the redness of the face being referred to that emotion. From this meaning, the verb passes to imply a burning with zeal for some object. In the use of the noun here to confirm the promise of a kingdom, holy and Davidic, it is in full accord with the meaning of the great Isaian phrase, the "Holy One of Israel."

Meanwhile, Tiglath-pileser was marching southward through the plain of Sharon into the plain of the Philistines. He passes Jaffa or Joppa, that is, *Yāphô*, "beauty," where the grey green sea flowed beneath the yellowish houses on the one great rock that breaks



the level sands between Gaza and Strato's Tower, the Cæsarea of Herod the Great. Though Joppa is the seaport of Jerusalem and the road between the towns only thirty-five miles, the Assyrian does not deviate from his march southward. He passes Jamnia; and behind the hills on his left is Ekron, from which another road in vain invites him eastward towards Jerusalem. Ashdod is left, and its road eastward to Bethlehem, for the Assyrians' goal is Gaza. As he approaches it, the king, Hanno, flies into Egypt, while Tiglath-pileser, as he himself records, carries away the spoils and gods of the city.

At such a moment, it ill became the Ten Tribes in his rear to lift their heads with pride. The judgment of God on them, in spite of all they had suffered, was not yet complete. And Isaiah, taking a refrain from a prediction he had sung in the days of Jotham, c. v. 25, tells of Divine anger not returned to its Source, and of the Divine Hand still outstretched in judgment.

The first of the four strophes or stanzas tells of Northern Israel's pride, the Ten Tribes being named Jacob in the first line and Israel in its parallel.

ix. 7. Jehovah sent a word into Jacob;  
And it fell into Israel.

8. And they will know—  
The people, all of them—  
Ephraim,  
And the dweller of Samaria—  
In pride  
And in greatness of heart, saying,

9. "Bricks fell;  
"And we will build hewn stone.  
"Sycamores were cut down;  
"And we will substitute cedars."

10. And Jehovah will elevate the adversaries of Rezin  
against them ;  
And He will instigate their enemies—

11. Syria in front,  
And Philistines behind—

And they will eat Israel  
With every mouth.

In all this, His wrath has not returned ;  
And His Hand is still outstretched.

In the first line, the Greek Vulgate has “death” instead of “word,” so it evidently read the consonants as *débher*, “destruction” and “plague,” instead of *dābhār*, a “word,” though the latter seems more appropriate in view of the verb, “and they will know.” The word fell into Israel like a thunderbolt. In this passage the verb “fell” cannot be rendered “failed,” as in *Joshua* xxi. 45 and 1 *Kings* viii. 56, because here it is followed by the preposition *b*, “in” or “into,” and the remaining lines show that this word of God will be effective. In the phrase, “the people, all of them,” the pronoun is singular, as in the expressions, “against them,” and “their enemies,” of v. 10; but it is used collectively of the Ten Tribes. Greatness of heart, we note, is parallel to pride, and synonymous with insolence. Then as to the rebuilding with hewn stone and cedars instead of the crumbling sun-dried brick and spongy, knotty sycamore, which the Assyrian had ruined, it would seem to be a figurative way of saying that North Israel would rise again and reach a more splendid position than it had occupied before its fall. This is certainly the meaning implied, if we interpret the words by lx. 17, where Jehovah promises to substitute gold for bronze, silver for iron, bronze for wood, and iron for stones, in the restored Zion.

But it is to be noted that in the present passage, the Northern Israelites boast they will achieve the restoration themselves.

In verses 10 and 11, the boast is contradicted. Rezin's adversaries, the Assyrians, will be raised against Israel. Soon, very soon, indeed next year, these foemen will besiege Rezin's city of Damascus, and waste his kingdom of Syria. And in twelve years, after a three years' siege, Samaria of Israel will fall. The sense is quite plain, so there is no necessity for omitting the word "adversaries" with Lagarde, or of changing it into "princes" with forty manuscripts, Houbigant, Ewald, and Cheyne. That first line announces the Assyrians' attack on North Israel; but there are other enemies. These too Jehovah will instigate, for so we interpret the Pilpel or reduplicated form of the verb *sākāk*, to "prick." In this we follow the Targum and Gesenius' *Thesaurus*, the translation being confirmed by the rendering of both Targum and Greek Vulgate in xix. 2. But who are those other enemies? They are Israel's present allies, Syria and Philistia, Rezin of Damascus and Hanno of Gaza, with whom it had formed a coalition against Assyria. It would miss the point of the utterance, if our explanation followed that of Delitzsch in regarding the Syrians as destined to attack North Israel and the Philistines to invade Judah. Syria and Philistia will eat Israel, and this name has been already explained in v. 8, of "Ephraim and the dweller of Samaria." Like a monster with many heads, its former allies march against Israel to devour it with every mouth. We render *kol-péh* as "every mouth," not as "the whole mouth" or "open mouth," because the noun is not made definite by an article, genitive, suffix, or use as a proper name; and our translation accords with the Syriac Vulgate, which



renders the expression "with all their mouths." Finally, the words "in all this" in the last couplet, which forms the refrain, mean "for all this," "in spite of all this."

The second strophe or stanza, using the prophetic past tense, denounces Ephraim, the Ten Tribes, as given up to believe lies. The condemnation falls most fiercely on the elders and the prophets, described as head and tail, palm-branch and rush, the metaphor in v. 13 being interpreted literally in v. 14, after Isaiah's fashion. Palms, it may be noted, were once very common in Palestine, and became the symbol of Judea on Roman coins. In Hebrew, *kippáh*, "a palm-branch," is connected with *kaph*, a "hand," just as the Latin *palma* means both the palm of the hand and the palm tree, both branches and leaves of the tree suggesting a hand somewhat curved. The rush, *'agmôn*, derives its Hebrew name from the *'āgham* or marsh in which it grows.

The first couplet is an example of synonymous parallelism, the second line repeating the idea in the first.

ix. 12. And the people did not return unto the [One] smiting it ;  
And they did not seek Jehovah of Hosts.

13. And Jehovah cut off from Israel head and tail,  
Palm-branch and rush [in] one day.

14. Old man and lifted up of face—he [is] the head ;  
And prophet teaching a lie—he [is] the tail.

15. And the directors of this people have become mis-  
leaders ;  
And its led ones are devoured.

16. Therefore the Lord will not rejoice over its young  
men ;  
And He will not pity its orphans and its widows.

For all of it is profane and evil-doing ;  
And every mouth [is] speaking folly.

In all this, His wrath has not returned ;  
And His Hand is still outstretched.

In v. 14, we have rendered the Hebrew phrase for "honoured" literally as "lifted up of face"; and in v. 16 we have retained "Lord," *ādōnāy*, instead of following eighteen manuscripts in substituting "Jehovah." Verse 15 connects the three ideas of directors, misleaders, and devouring, like iii. 12, where we read,

My people, thy directors [are] misleaders ;  
And they have devoured the way of thy paths.

The word for "young men" means primarily "tested ones," "approved ones," "chosen ones." When it is said the Lord will not rejoice over them, the figure is evidently *lítótes* or *meiósis*, that is, understatement, like St. Paul's "I praise not," 1 *Corinthians* xi. 17, 22. So it is unnecessary to follow Lagarde with Guthe, Kittel, Duhm, Cheyne, and Marti in rewriting the prophecy by substituting *yiphsach*, "he will spare," for *yismach*, "he will rejoice," which is supported by ancient authorities. Some discussion has also been occasioned by the expression "profane and evil-doing." The former word is variously rendered in the Greek Vulgate, "impious," "lawless," "transgressing" and twice "hypocrite." The verb certainly means "to be profaned" or "polluted," and hence "to be profane" or "impious," "profaned by impiety." The latter word, "evil-doing," *mēra'*, is, as Delitzsch points out, a sharpened form, as in *Proverbs* xvii. 4, for *mērēa'*, the Hiphil or causative participle of a double Ayin verb. "Evil-doing" is therefore the correct translation, and not "from the evil," as if the word was pointed *mērā'*.

The third strophe or stanza describes the wrongs that will follow, the pride and the misbelief of the Northern

kingdom. The wickedness of the people will consume first individual Israelites; and then, gathering strength, it will become a forest fire to destroy groups,—thickets, not merely brier and bramble. The trees are burnt, and become as it were “uprolled” upward to the sky in a “column” and volume of smoke. The word for “uprolled” occurs here only, though a similar word is used in *Judges* vii. 13 of the “tumbling” or “rolling” of the barley loaf into the Midianite camp. And the word for “column” is simply that for an “uplifting.” In reply from heaven, earth will be burnt up by Jehovah’s “surpassing wrath,” this name being derived from the root “to pass over.” Then the scene of woe is described in a quatrain, in which the first line is answered by the fourth, and the second by the third. This was called “introverted parallelism” by Jebb in his *Sacred Literature*, § iv., and had previously been noted by Lowth in his *Isaiah*, Preliminary Dissertation, xiv. It is indeed rare, but we have examples of it in *Proverbs* xxiii. 15, 16, and *Isaiah* xi. 12 and lix. 8. We have another illustration of it in St. John’s Prologue, i. 14, where the second and third lines form a parenthesis :

And the Word became Flesh, and tabernacled among us—  
 And we beheld His Glory,  
 Glory as of Soleborn from Father—  
 Full of grace and truth.

In the present passage, formed of the last line in v. 18 and the three lines of v. 19, the first and fourth lines have their verbs in the future; and the second and third, theirs in the prophetic past :

They will not spare—each his brother—  
 And he hewed on the right, and hungered;  
 And he eat on the left, and they were not satisfied—  
 They will eat—each the flesh of his arm.



There is no need therefore to make the first line third with Duhm, Marti, and Cheyne, or fourth with Condamin.

As to the meaning of the words, they describe an internecine conflict, defined in the next verse as a contention within North Israel itself—between Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph. Such was the state of affairs when Pekah murdered Pekahiah, *2 Kings* xv. 25; and such it will be again when Hosea will conspire against Pekah, *2 Kings* xv. 30. Of the two tribes, that on the left or north, as the Targum explains it—that is, Manasseh—will hew at that on the right or south, that is Ephraim, which will eat its assailant. Neither will be satisfied, for such a war of kinsmen is cannibalism. In destroying their brothers, they eat their own flesh, the flesh of their arm, their own strength and defence. The figure is a bold one, and it is preserved by the Greek and Latin Vulgates. Nor need we adopt Secker's proposal to alter the *z'rô'ô*, "his arm," of the Hebrew text into *rê'ô*, "his neighbour," because the metaphor is so, and rightly, explained in the Targum, *Jeremiah*, xix. 9, and the Alexandrian manuscript of the Greek Vulgate.

Now the third strophe reads :

- ix. 17. For as the fire, wickedness devoured :  
It will eat brier and bramble.

And it kindled in the thickets of the forest ;  
And they uprolled—a column of smoke.

18. With the wrath of Jehovah, earth is burnt up ;  
And the people has become food of fire.

They will not spare—each his brother—

19. And he hewed on the right, and hungered ;  
And he eat on the left, and they were not satisfied—  
They will eat—each the flesh of his arm.

20. Manasseh [fought] Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh ;  
Together they [fought] against Judah.

In all this, His wrath has not returned ;  
And His Hand is still outstretched.

Some difficulty has been raised with regard to the word for “kindled” in v. 17, and that for “burnt up” in v. 18. The former is the Qal or simple form of *yātsáth*, “to kindle” or “be kindled.” The latter is best explained not as “to tremble” with the Syriac Vulgate, nor as “to be disturbed” with the Latin Vulgate, nor as “to be darkened” with Kimchi, but as “to be burnt up” with the Aramaic Targum, the Greek Vulgate, and the “food of fire” in the parallel line. Its masculine form, although its subject is the feminine “earth,” is more easily explained here and in *Genesis* xiii. 6 and *Psalms* cv. 30, in accordance with Gesenius’ *Grammar*, § 147, by the position of the verb before its subject, than by a new conjecture as to the correct text.

## CHAPTER X

Now in the fourth strophe, the prophet announces judgment on the unjust judges of the Northern kingdom. There is no special reason to suppose he refers to Judah at all, though similar abuses reigned there. About 760 B.C., only twenty-six years earlier, Amos had denounced the Ten Tribes on account of those who drank in the house of their God the wine [bought with the money] of the fined [unjustly], ii. 8—those who stored in their palaces violence and robbery, that is, treasures amassed by those means, iii. 10—those who took ransoms from murderers, contrary to the law of *Numbers* xxxv. 31, and turned the needy aside in the gate, that is, in the place of justice, c. v. 12.

The fourth strophe or stanza in successive couplets tells of the oppression, of its purpose against the feeble and the afflicted, and against widows and orphans. Then, predicting the storm of vengeance, it asks what refuge remains to the guilty, except to hide themselves and their ill-gotten wealth under prisoners and corpses on the battle-field. So the prophecy closes with an unmistakable reference to the deportation and exile of Northern Israel, to follow the fall of Samaria in 722, twelve years after Isaiah has spoken these words, *2 Kings* xvii. 6. And terrible as is the judgment, it does not exhaust the vengeance, for the refrain of the outstretched hand is repeated.

- x. 1. Woe! The [men] decreeing decrees of inanity!  
And writing toil, they wrote



2. To turn aside feeble [men] from trial at [law],  
And to snatch the judgment of the humbled of My  
people ;

For widows to be their prey ;  
And they will spoil orphans.

3. And what will you do for the day of visitation ?  
And for a storm—it will come from afar.

Upon whom will you flee for help ?  
And where will you leave your wealth ?

4. [There will be no refuge] except he bowed under a  
prisoner ;  
And they will fall under slain [men].

In all this, His wrath has not returned ;  
And His Hand is still outstretched.

In the second line, it is not necessary to follow Delitzsch in changing the Massoretic accentuation, which connects “toil” with “writing” and not with “wrote.” Here, and here only, the verb “to write” is in the Piel or intensive form. This is hardly, as Alexander suggests, to give it frequentative force, but rather, as Knabenbauer implies, to indicate the zeal of the writers, or, it may be, the importance of the writings, these being judicial sentences corresponding to the “decrees” in the parallel line.

The Hebrew word for “visitation,” *p'quddáh*, in the phrase “the day of visitation,” means not a mere inspection, but as *Exodus* xxxii. 34, it is Jehovah’s visiting His people, when He visits their sin upon them. Such is evidently the meaning in Hosea’s “days of the visitation,” ix. 7, and in Jeremiah’s “time” or “year” of visitation, viii. 12, x. 15, xi. 23, xxiii. 12, xlvi. 21, xlviii. 44, l. 27, li. 18.

Then as to the storm from afar, it is another Assyrian

invasion, one that will involve the fall of Northern Israel in 722, completing the present invasion of Tiglath-pileser in 734. The future calamity is pictured as a storm: the present one had been represented as an overflow of the Euphrates, viii. 7. The word for "storm," *shô'áh*, is derived from the root *shô'* cognate to *shā'áh*, both meaning "to crash" or "make a noise."

We may note also the pregnant construction in

"Upon whom will you flee for help?"

The full expression would be "Upon whom will you [throw yourselves and] flee [to him] for help?" Then the word we have rendered "wealth" is literally "glory"; but our translation is fully justified by the context here, as it would be in *Genesis* xxxi. 1, *Isaiah* lxi. 6 and lxvi. 12.

To justify our rendering of the first line in v. 4, we note that the construction of the word for "except," *biltî*, is exemplified in *Genesis* xliii. 3. Lagarde, on the other hand, in the *Academy* of December the 15th, 1870, suggested a new pointing for the consonants, so that the Hebrew should read *bēltî khōra'ath chath 'ōsîr*. It might then mean, "Beltis has bowed down; broken is Osiris." No doubt, these Egyptian idols were worshipped in Phœnicia, and may have been introduced from Tyre and Sidon into Northern Israel, which indeed had direct relations with Egypt at this time, as we see in *Hosea* vii. 11 and xii. 1. Further, it may be an answer to the preceding question, in suggesting there is none to whom the Israelite can flee. But the new pointing disturbs the parallelism with the following line. And it is hardly possible that such an interpretation could have been the original meaning, and yet have left no trace in ancient version or more recent writer till the year 1870 A.D.

While Isaiah was uttering that great song against Samaria, Tiglath-pileser was occupying the halls of Hanno in Gaza. After all, Gaza is not far from Jerusalem. There is a road from Gaza to Hebron, and another from Hebron by Bethlehem to Jerusalem, about sixty miles in all. But the Assyrian must return home northward; and having travelled a little more than forty miles, he finds himself at Jaffa. Straight eastward to Bethel would be thirty miles, the distance by road being somewhat more. From Bethel southward to Jerusalem is merely a matter of ten miles or so.

The moment is not a happy one for Jerusalem. Its inhabitants may well tremble in their lack of faith. But Isaiah, who had announced the repeated sifting of the nation by calamity, vi. 13, had also foretold the preservation of the Remnant, x. 21, and indicated the inviolability of Jerusalem, iv. 5. And now dealing, not with Samaria as in the last song, but with Jerusalem, Isaiah will still more unfold his doctrines of the sifting and the Remnant and Jerusalem. In a song of seven strophes or stanzas, he will elaborate the Isaian Philosophy of History, Jewish or Catholic.

Such a philosophy must regard the series of events as a whole, and grasp the principles illustrated there, for very definite principles are embodied in the history of Revelation from Abraham to Pius the Tenth. When the facts of that history are stored in the memory, and a scientific analysis has determined their relations of cause and effect, there still remains the philosophic research into the principles realised to find the ultimate ground or reason of the whole process. The principles are readily found or deduced from this new song. Isaiah recognises God's testing of His people to eliminate the faithless. The life of God's Kingdom, whether in Ex-



pectant Israel or in Messianic—that is, the Church—may appear to some a battle of psychical values, not of physical forces; to others, a judging of right and wrong by the Divine Lawgiver; and to others, a movement of good and worth towards a Divine end and purpose, and of evil and worthlessness from it. These are present to Isaiah, but the life of the Kingdom is imaged by him, x. 17, as by St. Peter I., i. 7, as the undergoing purification in a furnace. The enemy of the kingdom, though he threaten the successor of David in Jerusalem, is but an instrument of the purification, and is described as an axe, a saw, a rod, x. 15. Under the New Dispensation, the same may be said of the Antichristian spirit, 2 *Thessalonians* ii. 11, and of heresies, 1 *Corinthians* xi. 19, just as Attila the Hun was the Scourge of God in 452 A.D., when he marched on Rome, from which he was turned back by Leo, the First and the Great, Vicar of David's Son.

Further, the victory over the enemy is one of Divine faith, supernatural faith in God, according to *Isaiah* vii. 9, x. 20, and 1 *St. John* v. 4. And that victory is assured in every case, for the Remnant must be preserved to preserve the continuity of doctrine and practice. The gates of Hell cannot prevail against Israel, *Isaiah* x. 21, or the Church, *Matthew* xvi. 18. We may note that such continuity is not a mere succession of imitators. Certainly, it always includes the Deposit of the Faith, that is, the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God and the Authentic Traditions as containing the Revelation. But it includes also a process that moves in even fuller and more explicit definition of the Deposit. Nor is the process of true development the less evident, because Sadducees refused its Israelite form, and Protestants its Catholic one. And as the Israelite process moved

towards the First Advent of Messiah, *Galatians* iii. 24, so does the Catholic move towards the Second, *Ephesians* iv. 13. But besides God's testing by calamity and His using the enemy as an instrument of purification, besides the people's attaining victory by faith and their preservation in a Remnant, there is also the supernatural character of the Kingdom, *Isaiah* x. 20 and *John* i. 12, 13, and its Catholic claim to embrace all nations in Divine judgment, *Isaiah* x. 23, and in Divine authority, *Matthew* xxviii. 18-20.

The first strophe tells how the Assyrian, proud of his power and his conquests, dreams of subjecting Jerusalem utterly. Though Ahaz had already made himself a vassal of Tiglath-pileser, yet we can gather from the constant attitude and policy of the empires on the Tigris and Euphrates, that something more would be sought. For example, as he wrote on the *Taylor cylinder*, column iii, lines 34-39, Sennacherib, in 701, received Hezekiah's submission with a tribute of 30 gold talents and silver talents to the number of 800, that is, 200 in the Hebrew reckoning of 2 *Kings* xviii. 14, together with precious stones, blocks of lapis-lazuli, couches of ivory, seats of ivory and elephant-hide, valuable wood, Hezekiah's daughters and harem women, and his slaves, both men and women. And Sennacherib, having received the tribute, nonetheless demanded the full surrender of Jerusalem, 2 *Kings* xviii. 17.

The Assyrian's view failed in perspective. To him, all the nations of the world appeared on one level, and that far below himself, for he did not perceive the difference between Jerusalem and other cities, or his own subordinate office as a minister of Divine judgment. The very excellence of Jerusalem, its monotheism, made it, even in the days of Ahaz and his apostasy, seem

inferior to other cities in the splendour and variety of images. So the Catholic Religion in the England of to-day is sometimes regarded as a Lazarus at the door of wealthier Protestant sects because of a poverty which is due to her fidelity during the Tudor confiscations and the Penal Laws. The Assyrian's inability, shared by some rationalists of our own day, to distinguish between the position of Jerusalem and that of other cities, between Jehovah and heathen idols, between the natural order and the manifestations of supernatural power, is expressed now in 734 by Isaiah, and will in 701 again be made clear by Sennacherib's Rabshakeh or Rab-saki, "chief of the heads" or "captains," that is, the chief captain, *Isaiah* xxxvii. 10-12.

In the first strophe of the Isaian song, we read :

- x. 5. Woe [to] Asshur, the club of My anger ;  
And a staff [is] he in their hand—My indignation.
6. I shall send him against a profane nation ;  
And I shall command him against the people of My  
wrath,  
  
To spoil spoil  
And to prey [upon] prey,  
  
And to put it [for] treading,  
Like the clay of the streets.
7. And he, he will not deem so ;  
And his heart will not account so.  
  
For to destroy [is] in his heart,  
And to cut off nations, not a few.
8. For he will say,  
"Are not my princes altogether kings ?
9. "Is not Calno as Carchemish ?  
  
" [May I be ruined] if Hamath [is] not as Arpad,  
"If Samaria is not as Damascus.



10. "According as my hand has reached the kingdoms of the idols—

"And their carvings [were] more than [those of] Jerusalem, and more than [those of] Samaria ;

"[Shall I] not,—according as I have done to Samaria and to its idols,—

"So shall I do to Jerusalem and to its images ? ”

The word *hōy* may be rendered by "woe," or by "alas" or by "ho," as in xviii. 1. It may be followed by a noun with or without a preposition, the noun in the latter case not being vocative but really the object of the woe. So it matters little whether we translate the phrase "Woe to Asshur," or "Woe! Asshur," provided the latter rendering is not taken as necessarily addressed to Asshur, for such an interpretation would run counter to the Greek Vulgate in i. 4, and to the third person of the Hebrew verb in c. v. 8, 11, 21.

As to the name Asshur or Ashshur, it was originally A-usar, the name of Assyria's first capital. For this city the Assyrians borrowed Babylonian ritual and doctrine; and for the local sun-god, they borrowed from Marduk, the patron god of Babylon, his title of *Ashir*, "protector." Such is the spelling in the Irishum inscription of 1730 B.C.; but at a later time the names of city and god were assimilated, both being spelt "Asshur." The god became representative of the whole Assyrian empire, even when its capital was changed from Asshur to Calah and from Calah to Nineveh, and though its limits might embrace Babylonia. Without child or female counterpart, this god was represented as a winged disk on the army standards, and became one with the military genius of the empire.

Some difficulty has been raised regarding the words "he in their hand" in the second line of the strophe. They are not a gloss, for a notemaker would have written

“which [is] in their hand,” not “he in their hand,” and the omission of the words would make the line very short compared with its parallel. On the other hand, we cannot point and treat the word for “staff” as in the construct case, and offer the rendering “staff of my indignation,” for the governed word cannot be so separated from the governing. Asshur or Assyria is the staff, and that staff is used to execute God’s indignation. Consequently, Assyria can poetically be described as God’s indignation itself. Then the words “in their hand” refer to those who wield the staff, that is, to the angels of God. So we may render the line,

A staff [is] he in their hand—My indignation.

This gives a dramatic ending to the verse, even if the line be broken unevenly; and it has the advantage of preserving the Massoretic tradition embodied in the accents.

With regard to the cities mentioned, we have already, in describing Tiglath-pileser’s march, noted that Calno or the Kullani district had been conquered by him in 738, that Carchemish had paid him tribute in 743 and 738, that Arpad had fallen before him in 743 and again in 740, and that now, as he had come southwards, ravaging and devastating, Hamath, Damascus, and Samaria had been unable to protect their territories. No siege of Damascus is implied; and as to Samaria, nothing more is involved than the destruction, noted in ix. 9. There is therefore no need to date this song after Tiglath-pileser’s siege of Damascus in 733, or after the fall of that city in 732, or after the capture of Samaria by Sargon in 722. It belongs to the year we are considering, 734 B.C.

In v. 10, we have rendered the Hebrew word for “the idol” in the plural, as the article is evidently generic. And the word “idols,” or nonentities, is appropriate

enough in the mouth of the Assyrian, when he is proudly comparing his own god Asshur with the objects worshipped by those he himself had vanquished under Asshur's standard. In the same line, there is a phrase, "my hand has reached," or "found," followed here and in *Psalms* xxi. 9 (Hebrew) by the preposition *l*, "to," and in *1 Samuel* xxiii. 17, by the accusative of the person. It seems to imply the finding or reaching with a view to vengeance or conquest. In the same verse 10, as "more than" is a translation of *min*, the preposition "from," used to form the comparative, there is no indication whether the antecedent is more in excellence or in power or in number. It is hardly necessary to add that the "if not" in verse 9 is employed as in *c. v.* 9 to signify "assuredly," some such expression as "may God ruin me" being understood. So we may render the sentence, "[May God ruin me] if Hamath [is] not as Arpad," or "Assuredly Hamath [is] as Arpad."

As some writers have urged that Rabshakeh's speech was really copied by a scribe from these verses of Isaiah, it may be well to pause a moment and read the strophe again, especially verses 8 to 11. Then we may turn to xxxvii. 10-13, and note the differences between the speech poetically ascribed by Isaiah to Tiglath-pileser and that historically attributed by Isaiah to Sennacherib's Rabshakeh or Rab-saki, that is, his "Chief of the heads" or "captains." In the second passage we read:

xxxvii. 10. Let not thy God deceive thee—  
In Whom thou [art] trusting.

[He] saying, Jerusalem shall not be given  
In [to] the hand of the king of Assyria.

11. Behold—thou, thou hast heard  
What they have done—the kings of Assyria—



To all the lands—to devote them [to destruction] ;  
And thou—thou shalt be delivered !

12. Did the gods of the nations deliver them  
Whom my fathers destroyed—

[That is] Gozan and Haran and Retseph,  
And the sons of Eden who [were] in Tel-Assar ?

13. Where [is] the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad,  
And the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena and  
Ivvah ?

The second strophe or stanza of Isaiah's song tells us that the Assyrian's proud boast of strength and intelligence will be punished, when the king has done his work as God's axe, saw, club, and rod against Jerusalem. Very powerful is the description of Tiglath-pileser's devastation in Syria and Palestine as the gathering of eggs from the nests of frightened birds. Then he asks if an axe can behave itself proudly in regard to the man, who uses it. And he answers it can do so, if a saw can ; and with true Isaian irony, he adds impossible parallels on the part of a club and a staff.

- x. 12. And it will be, when the Lord will cut short all His work  
In the mountain of Zion and in Jerusalem,

I shall visit upon the fruit of the greatness of the heart  
of the king of Assyria,  
And upon the display of the loftiness of his eyes.

13. For he said,

“In the strength of my hand, I did [it] ;

“And in my wisdom, for I am intelligent.

“And I removed the boundaries of peoples,

“And I plundered their stores.

“And as the Mighty [One], I subdued inhabitants ;

14. “And as the nest, my hand reached to the wealth of the  
peoples.

“And as the gathering of eggs [that are] forsaken,  
 “I, I have gathered all the earth.

“And there was not a moving wing,  
 “And a mouth gaping and chirping.”

15. Will the axe display itself against the [one] hewing  
 with it?

[It will], if the saw will magnify itself against [the one]  
 swaying it :

As a club sways the [men who are] lifting it ;  
 As a staff lifts [him who is] not-wood.

The verb, in the Piel or intensive form, which we have, in v. 12, rendered “cut short,” means not merely “to finish” but “to finish abruptly.” In xxxviii. 12, it is used of “cutting off” from the thrum by which the web is fastened to the weaver’s beam. Then some, supported by the Greek Vulgate, would alter “I shall visit” into “he will visit.” The latter reading is less probable, as it has apparently been introduced to smooth the grammar. The enallage or change of person, from the third to the first, is rather to be retained on account of its dramatic force. As to the succession of genitives in the second couplet, it suggests the swelling pride it describes, so that the construction of the sentence and the words are in harmony. The “greatness of heart” is evidently not magnanimity, but the pride opposed to humbleness of heart. In v. 13, “I am intelligent,” or “discerning” or “skilful,” translates the Niphal or passive form of the verb *bîn*, “to distinguish,” or “discern.” In the case of “And I removed,” and “And I subdued,” it will be understood that we point the conjunction *waw* with *Qámets*, or *ā*, to mark it as *waw* conversive of the future, else we must render those verbs as futures, inconsistently with the context. The word rendered “plundered” is interesting to grammarians as the only example of the

Poel perfect in a verb with *He* for third radical. The word for "stores" is from a root "to be ready"; and, as in *Deuteronomy* xxxii. 35, it means "things made ready," "prepared," or "stored up." Nothing could be happier than the description of Tiglath-pileser as one who removed boundaries and plundered stores. Deporting the inhabitants of Unqi or 'Amq after the fall of Arpad in 740, he had begun what became the Assyrian policy. His own records, as, for example, in regard to his capture of Gaza, sufficiently vindicate his right to be described as a plunderer of stores.

We have rendered the last line of v. 13,

And as the Mighty [One], I subdued inhabitants.

The Massoretic footnote reads "the Mighty [One]," a word found only here, xvi. 14, xvii. 12, xxviii. 2, and *Job* viii. 2, xv. 10, xxxi. 25, xxxiv. 17, 24, xxxvi. 5, where it is applied to the strength of arms, multitude, waters, wind, experience, wealth, God, or men. The word in the present Hebrew text means "the Strong One." It is used of men, bulls, horses, and, with a slightly different pointing, of God as the Strong One of Israel, i. 24. Some would translate the remainder of the line as "I caused [those] sitting [on thrones] to descend," the word thrones being understood and the reference being to kings. So the Latin Vulgate speaks of those sitting "on high." But the Greek Vulgate renders the words "I shall shake inhabited cities"; and this accords with the more familiar sense of the words, "I subdued inhabitants." In urging this simpler translation, Alexander might have appealed to 2 *Samuel* xxii. 48, where God is described as "bringing down" or "subduing peoples under me," and to the parallel between this couplet and the preceding one, the first line in each dealing with the conquest of the peoples, and the second line with the seizure of their treasures.



It may also be noted that the word for "gathering" is the construct infinitive; that for "moving" is intransitive, and therefore we say "a moving wing," not "moving a wing"; and that for "chirping" is *m'tsaphtséph*, a Pilpel and onomatopoetic form. Whitehouse has pointed out how faithfully this passage of Isaiah reflects the language of the Assyrian kings, Asshur-natsir-pal III, a contemporary of Omri and Ahab, in his *Annals*, i. 48-51, having already described a mountain fortress as a bird's nest, and Sennacherib, according to the *Taylor cylinder*, being about to speak of Hezekiah as "shut up like a bird in a cage at Jerusalem." Indeed, Tiglath-pileser III, the king of Assyria, with whom we have to deal at present, uses the same phrase, "I shut him up like a bird in a cage," of Rezin or Rezon, the king of Damascus.

In the third strophe or stanza, the judgment on the Assyrian empire is announced. When it falls, it will be fulfilled "in one day," that is, in a short time. Nor is that inconsistent with an outlook much beyond the immediate present of the year 734 B.C., to a downfall, such as that realised in Sennacherib's defeat in 701. Indeed, the prophecy seems to include within its view the twenty-eight years of Scythian ravages in Western Asia and the Median razing of Nineveh in 607, when that city ended its thousand years of wealth and power. In the second strophe, "club" and "staff" were the repeated keywords, for Assyria's work as God's instrument was the theme. Now the keywords will be "glory" and "fire," for we are to consider the Assyrian's glory and Jehovah's fire to consume it. The judgment, indeed, is described in a double metaphor, both as sickness and fire. First of all, the Lord will send leanness into His fat ones, the Assyrians; as in *Psalms* cvi. 15, it is said of a judgment on the Israelites in the wilderness that

God "sent leanness into their soul," and in *Psalms* lxxviii. 31, that "He slew their fat ones."

Then a fire will kindle under the pomp and circumstance of Assyria; and Delitzsch has pointed out that the very words imitate the crackling and hissing of the fire, as the last two words of v. 18, *kimsós nōsés*, "like the melting away of [the man who is] pining away," suggest the last slow breaths of expiring life. The ruin will be complete. It will embrace the rank and file, described in the alliterative phrase peculiar to Isaiah, but now reversed, as "bramble and brier"; and it will also include the great ones, symbolized as a forest, and the wealthy ones, indicated as a Carmel, that is, a fruitful field or garden, the word, in Gesenius' view, being composed of *kérem*, a cultivated field or vineyard, and *el*, a diminutive suffix. Then changing his metaphor abruptly, as in c. v. 24, viii. 8, xxviii. 18, the prophet announces the destruction as complete from "soul and unto flesh," that is, perfectly. And as to what will survive, it will be like trees that are "a number," that is, "a [small] number," according to the meaning of the word in *Genesis* xxxiv. 30, *Numbers* ix. 20, *Deuteronomy* iv. 27, *Jeremiah* xlv. 28, 1 *Chronicles* xvi. 19. The number indeed will be so small that a mere lad may write or count them.

This description of the Assyrian's destruction as that of a forest is very appropriate, for Tiglath-pileser III himself boasts that he utterly destroyed the palms around the fortress of Chinzer; and, as Whitehouse points out, it was the custom of the Assyrian kings to fell valuable trees for transport to Nineveh. We may add that we have connected *nōsés*, the last word in v. 18, not with the Syriac *nas*, "to pine away," "be sick," for this may be derived from the Greek *nósos*, but with the Assyrian *nasâsu*, "to weep," or "lament"; and we have translated

it "[a man who is] pining away," as that sense seems perfectly adapted to the context. We do not therefore translate it "a standard-bearer," deriving it from *nāsás*, "to lift up," and connecting it with *nēs*, "a standard." For the same reason, we cannot follow the Greek and Latin Vulgates in rendering it "a fugitive," and connecting it with *nūs*, "to flee."

Before noting the Divine Names contained in the passage, we shall do well to read this, the third stanza itself, noting the reference of the personal pronouns.

x. 16. Therefore the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts, will send  
Leanness in [to] His fat ones.

And under his [the Assyrian's] glory, a kindling will  
kindle,  
Like the kindling of fire.

17. And the Light of Israel will become a fire ;  
And his [Israel's] Holy One a flame.

And it [the flame] will devour and eat his [the Assyrian's]  
bramble  
And his brier in one day.

18. And as to the glory of his forest and his fruitful-field,  
He [Jehovah] will consume [it] from soul and unto flesh ;  
And it will become like the melting away of [the man  
who is] pining away.

And the remnant of the trees of his [the Assyrian's] forest  
will become a [small] number ;  
And a lad will write them.

As to the names of God, we have first of all "the Lord," *hā-ādhôn*, used five times in this form by Isaiah, i. 24, iii. 1, x. 16, 33, xix. 4, in each case to introduce an announcement of judgment, and followed by the phrase "Jehovah of Hosts." In this place, a difficulty has been raised by some manuscripts, in which the title, "the Lord," is followed by "Adhônay of Hosts." Over fifty



manuscripts and twelve printed editions read "Jehovah," and in view of the other passages, to which we have referred, it seems Lowth and others are right in reading "Jehovah" here, and in arguing that it has been displaced by *Adhônay*, "Lord," through the mistaken reverence of a copyist. Further, the Massoretes do not include this place among the 134 passages in which *Adhônay* is properly found in the Hebrew text.

Then we find God named the "Light of Israel." In xlix. 6, the Divine Servant, who is Immanuel and God Incarnate, will be described as the "Light of Nations," and a day will come when He will proclaim Himself the "Light of the World," *John* viii. 12, ix. 5. But the Light that guided and illuminated Israel with truth is a consuming and devouring fire to destroy evil and unholiness, *Exodus* xix. 18, and *Deuteronomy* iv. 24, quoted in *Hebrews* xii. 29. It is true that "become a fire" is literally "become for a fire"; but the idiom is the same as that in the sentence, "man became a living soul," *Genesis* iii. 7. As to the name "the Holy One of Israel," it is Isaiah's characteristic title for God. It is found in earlier and later chapters alike, and is very natural to one who had heard the Seraphic Song, "Holy, Holy, Holy." In the present passage, it completes the picture beautifully. He who is the Light of Israel in respect of intellect and doctrine is also the Holy One of Israel in respect of will and conduct.

The third strophe ended with a prediction regarding the small number of the Assyrian Remnant. This word "Remnant," resumed and applied to Judah, is the keyword of the fourth strophe. It had been foretold that Abraham's seed should be innumerable as the dust of the earth, *Genesis* xiii. 16, as the stars of the heavens and the sand upon the shore of the sea, *Genesis* xxii. 17,

as the sand of the sea which cannot be numbered for multitude, *Genesis* xxxii. 12, and as the sand of the sea which will not be measured or numbered, *Hosea* ii. 1 (Hebrew). Yet, as St. Paul, in *Romans* ix. 27, 28, after nearly eight centuries, will argue from this very passage of Isaiah, only a Remnant will be saved. This doctrine, characteristic of our prophet, had already been presented dramatically in the naming of Isaiah's elder son, whose name Shear-yashubh, "a Remnant will return," vii. 3, is now taken up and made the first line of v. 21. The preservation of that Remnant implies the continuity of God's providence in regard of Israel. The traditions, the Law, the Dispensation, and the Revelation will be maintained; and the Gates or Power of Hell will not be permitted to prevail against them. To this, the very existence of the Catholic Church, that is, of Messianic or Christian Israel, to-day bears daily witness.

Of the Remnant, Isaiah says, "it will not yet again," or more literally "it will not again add to," lean on the rod used to smite it, as Ahaz has been doing in his alliance with Assyria. But it will return to "God, Mighty One." This title has already been given to Immanuel, ix. 6, and is here applied to Jehovah, both passages being harmonised in the Incarnation of Jehovah as Immanuel. Whether that return is to God only, or both to God and to the Holy Land, is much disputed, for the latter interpretation implies that Isaiah had some foreknowledge of the Exile. Now we found an indication of the Exile in c. v. 13; and in xi. 11, 12, we shall find a still clearer announcement of the Return to the Holy Land. Then the Remnant will worship the Holy One of Israel in faithfulness. The Hebrew word for "faithfulness" primarily means sureness, stability, security, as in xxxix. 8; but it may mean fidelity, that

is, sureness in promising, as in lix. 14, 15, and *Joshua* ii. 8; and also truth, or sureness in statement, *Isaiah* xlii. 3. When the Samaritans spoke about the place of worship, our Lord unveiled the Object and the mode of worship, the latter being "in spirit and truth," in accordance with the fact that God is spirit, *John* iv. 24. There the worship "in spirit" is Catholic worship, as opposed to one limited by the material bounds of a fixed place; and the worship "in truth" is opposed to worship by types and shadows. But in *Isaiah* the idea is rather that of fidelity and faithfulness, opposed to the disloyalty which had abandoned Jehovah for reliance upon Assyria.

Only a Remnant will return, because a consuming or extermination is decreed; and this comes overflowing with penal justice. It will be an "overflowing scourge," according to the mixed metaphor of xxviii. 18, which combines the "overflowing" of this strophe, v. 22, and the "scourge" of the next, v. 26. Primarily penal and avenging, the justice will also prove purgative and cleansing, as in i. 27, where we have already read that

Zion will be redeemed with judgment,  
And her returning ones with justice.

This is now within the prophet's view; and he sees the Lord making such a determined consumption or extermination in all the earth or land.

The last word is ambiguous, and may mean "land," that is the Holy Land, or "earth," that is, the inhabited world. The latter seems to be the meaning here, for it is supported not only by the Greek Vulgate, but also by a recurrence of the phrase in xii. 5, where it clearly refers to the whole world of man. The passage therefore indicates a universal judgment. In the *Book of Daniel*, this piece of Isaian apocalyptic is quoted and



enlarged. The very phrase “a consummation and [that] decided,” v. 23, is directly cited in *Daniel* ix. 27. This is elaborated by adding the notion of indignation from the next stanza, v. 25, and presented in *Daniel* xi. 36 as “the consummation of indignation, for [what has been] decided will be done.” All this is predicted of “that day,” v. 20, the day of national judgment, as in iii. 18, vii. 18, 20, 21, 23, and of Messianic deliverance as in iv. 2, yet including the day of judgment for the world. So our Lord in the Synoptic Apocalypse, *Matthew* xxiv.-xxv., *Mark* xiii., *Luke* xxi., presents a prophetic picture, which embraces both the Fall of Jerusalem and the Last Day.

Our translation of this the fourth strophe or stanza runs:

- x. 20. And it will be in that day,  
     The Remnant of Israel will not yet again—  
     And [what will have] escaped of the house of Judah—  
     Lean upon [him who is] smiting it.  
     And it will lean upon Jehovah—  
     The Holy One of Israel—in faithfulness.
21. A Remnant will return—  
     The Remnant of Jacob—  
     To God, Mighty One.
22. For, if it will become—  
     [That is] thy people—O Israel,  
     As the sand of the sea,  
     [Yet only] a Remnant of it will return:  
     A consuming [is] decided,  
     [One that is] overflowing [with] justice.
23. For a consummation and [that] decided,  
     The Lord, Jehovah of Hosts,  
     [Is] making amid all the earth.

“It will lean” represents the Niphal or passive of a root not used in Qal. The expression rendered literally “for if” may be rendered “but,” “unless,” or “except,”

after a negation, expressed or implied. As there is no such negation here, we give each word its full force, "for, if," in the sense of "for, though." The phrase "a Remnant of it," in v. 22, is literally "a Remnant in it," but "in it" is equivalent to "of it," as in *2 Kings* ix. 35, and *Zechariah* xiii. 8. The root of the word rendered "consummation" means "to finish." In v. 18, we have rendered its Piel or intensive form as "consume"; and from this v. 22 has the noun "consuming," used in *Deuteronomy* xxviii. 65, in regard to the "failing of eyes." The root of the words rendered "decided" means "to cut," "inscribe," "decree," "decide." The first word is the passive participle of Qal, and the second the Niphal participle. Finally, with regard to the phrase, "overflowing [with] justice," the antecedent is "consuming." The extermination will be a surpassing one, and, as Knabenbauer translates the phrase, "one that brings justice." We may render the words simply "overflowing with justice," because, as Gesenius' *Grammar*, § 138, points out, Hebrew verbs which signify fulness or want take an accusative.

It is a common theme of the prophets, and not of Isaiah alone, that a sinning people will be consumed by God's avenging justice. The phase, through which European civilisation has been passing, is less sensitive to the First or uncaused Cause than to secondary causes, those which are themselves effects of other causes. Whether the adoption of a materialist standpoint, or devotion to some provinces of physical science, or individualist ethics and atomist metaphysics, or all combined, may have led to the imprisonment of the mind within the bounds of finite causes, we need not now determine. Even to the men of our own day, the natural order of events, as Gibbon acknowledged, will

sometimes afford the strong appearance of moral retribution. For example, Martinique in the West Indies was a hot-bed of sin; and in 1902, the crucifixion of a pig by the people on Good Friday was followed by an eruption of Mont Pelée which destroyed the place and 40,000 persons. For nearly sixty years San Francisco had been the "Californian Sodom," when it was destroyed by earthquake and fire on the 18th of April 1906. In 1908, the Christmas number of *Il Telefono*, a popular paper of Messina, challenged the Infant Jesus to send them an earthquake. The answer came in three days, the town and neighbouring places being devastated.

The fourth stanza or strophe foretold the Remnant. The fifth will tell of their deliverance. Now the keywords will be "staff," "smiting" and "way of Egypt," applied first to Assyria's action against Judah, and then to God's action against Assyria. On its first occurrence, the expression "the way" or "manner of Egypt" recalls the rod of the taskmasters: on its second, the rod of Moses as outstretched over the Red Sea, those waters suggesting Judah's sea of troubles, *Zechariah* x. 11. This point, though supported by the use of the phrase in *Amos* iv. 10, is missed both by those who would treat the words in v. 24 as a gloss, and by those, like St. Jerome, who refer this passage to Sennacherib's invasion, not to Tiglath-pileser's, and render the expression "in the way to" or "from Egypt," as if they indicated an Egyptian expedition.

This, the fifth strophe, runs:

x. 24. Therefore, thus said the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts,  
Do not fear, O My people, dwelling in Zion, because of  
Assyria.

He will smite thee with the club,  
And he will lift his staff against thee in the way of Egypt.



25. For yet a small [minute], a little [moment],  
 And indignation [against Israel] will be consummated.  
 And My anger [will be bent] upon their [the Assyrians']  
 wasting away ;
26. And Jehovah of Hosts will make bare a scourge against  
 him,  
 Like the smiting of Midian in the Rock of Oreb.  
 And His staff [will be] over the sea ;  
 And He will lift it in the way of Egypt.
27. And it will be in that day,  
 His [the Assyrians'] load will depart from [being] upon  
 thy [Judah's] shoulder,  
 And his yoke from [being] upon thy neck ;  
 And [the] yoke will be broken because of fat.

As in xxix. 17, the phrase we have rendered "a small [minute], a little [moment]," means "a very little [while]," the time of course being counted from the lifting of the Assyrians' staff against Judah. In xvi. 14, the expression is applied to the remnant of Moab, and means "a very little [number]." As to "their wasting away," the preposition, especially when compared with that, *b*, in *Deuteronomy* xxix. 19 (Hebrew), shows the consumption to be the work of God's anger. It is not that with which He is angry, but that He designs for the object of His anger ; and therefore we have supplied the verb "will be bent." The noun is derived from the root *bālāh*, "to fail." Some printed editions and six manuscripts read *k* for *b*, deriving the noun from *kālāh*, "to be completed," "wasted." The matter is of little interest, except as illustrating the ease with which these letters, very similar in both the Aramæan and the square Hebrew alphabets, are mistaken for one another, the same difference of reading being found in *Job* xxi. 13, xxxvi. 11. Luzzatto indeed divides the word into two, pointing the first three

letters as *tēbhél*, "world," and the remaining three as *yittóm*, "it will be completed," the whole line being interpreted as "And My anger against [the] world will be completed." If the learned man sought only our admiration for his ingenuity, verily, he has his reward.

In v. 26, "make bare" renders the Hebrew word 'óré<sup>r</sup>, Poel form of 'ā<sup>r</sup>ár, "to be naked," and found also in 2 *Samuel* xxiii. 18, where it is used in reference to a spear. But in the present passage, it is to be noted that it forms an assonance with 'óreb<sup>h</sup>, "Oreb" or "raven." As to 'óreb<sup>h</sup> itself, there is some similarity between it, the Sanskrit *kārawa*, the Greek *kórax*, the Latin *corvus*, and the English *crow*. Indeed, in spite of the Arabic *ghirāb*, "a raven," it would appear that the root is not Semitic.

In v. 27, Judah is pictured first as an ox carrying a load, then as an ox drawing a cart, and finally as an ox that grows fat till it breaks the wooden bars which keep the cross-beam in its place on the neck, and bursts the thongs or "bonds," which connect those bars under the neck and fasten the shaft to the yoke. Much controversy, however, has arisen as to the words "because of the fat." First of all, as to the preposition, in *Psalms* lxviii. 3, wax is said to melt before fire, or on account of fire. Then as to the metaphor, Israel is compared in *Deuteronomy* xxxii. 15 to an animal that became fat and kicked, and in *Hosea* iv. 16 to a stubborn heifer. Isaiah indeed regards the deliverance as due to the growing strength of Judah; but *Jeremiah* xxx. 8, with a possible allusion to our present passage, refers it to God, its ultimate cause:

And it will be in that day,  
Declared Jehovah of Hosts,

I shall break his yoke from [being] upon thy neck;  
And I shall tear away thy bonds.

As the word "fat" means "oil" also, St. Jerome and others explain the phrase "from the face of the oil," that is, from the face of the Divine Mercy, which loosens the yoke. St. Ephraem, Maldonatus, and others render the word as "anointed," and refer it to Hezekiah. The Aramaic Targum makes it not only personal, but also Messianic, paraphrasing it, "And the peoples shall be destroyed from the face of the Messiah." Others again unfortunately confuse the construction with a different one in *Psalm* cix. 24, and render it "for want of oil." Lowth indeed would change the *shámen*, "oil," of the text into *shíkm'kém*, "your shoulder," following the Greek Vulgate, which reads "your shoulders," itself an error occasioned by the previous "thy shoulder" in the same verse. Secker would change either the *shámen*, "oil," into *sh'mí*, "my name," or the *mípp'né*, "from the face of" or "on account of," into *míbb'né*, "from the sons of," explained as "by the sons of." But there is no limit, except that of patience, to such conjectures. Duhm even changes the three last words of the verse to make them read, "he ascended from P'nê-Rimmôm," that is, "from the face of Rimmon," or "Rammân" the name being explained by the analogy of Peni-el in *Genesis* xxxii. 30, the place being identified with the rock of Rimmon in *Judges* xx. 45, and the words being included in the next strophe, which pictures the Assyrian's advance against Jerusalem.

The sixth strophe is not a prophecy of Nebuchadrezzar's approach in 588, for he will come to conquer, not to be conquered, like the Assyrian in the present song. Some suggest the difficult route traced here was that taken by Sennacherib's Rabshakeh, or chief captain, to surprise the city, Sennacherib himself being at that time in the south. But it must be remembered that Sennacherib in



701 took the fortified cities of Judah, *Isaiah* xxxvi. 1, *Taylor cylinder* iii. 34-39, received the submission of Hezekiah, *2 Kings* xviii. 14-16, and advanced towards Egypt before the Rabshakeh was sent back to demand a complete surrender, *2 Kings* xviii. 17, *Isaiah* xxxvi. 2; and the towns named may well indicate the line of Sennacherib's first approach. Other places too would be devastated, but the prophecy is made the more vivid by the naming some of the villages on the route. And in *Micah* i. 9-16, we have a contemporary prophecy, containing a similar announcement of the Assyrian invasion, a similar reference to Sennacherib's first approach, and a similar naming of towns.

At the present moment we suppose Tiglath-pileser to be on his road northward from Gaza. If he has reached Jaffa, then Bethel is only thirty miles to the east, though the road makes the journey a little more. From Bethel southward to Jerusalem is about ten miles, whether we travel with one detachment of soldiers through Michmash and Geba, or with another through Ramah and Gibeah.

We may, however, regard the prophet as employing a common feature of invasions to describe the hostility of the empires on the Tigris and Euphrates to the citadel of God's kingdom. But there is more in the song, for it makes clear the Divine principle that the Gates or Power of Hell may not prevail against an Institution which embodies the purpose of God. The danger from Tiglath-pileser is utilised for a warning to the people, and the defeat of Sennacherib is predicted; but the outlook reaches beyond these to every attempt against the kingdom of God, and to the ultimate defeat of its enemies, whether men or devils.

In accordance with the suggestion of the prophet, we

suppose the Assyrians to be marching from Bethel on Jerusalem. Scarcely more than two miles south-east of Bethel, a detachment enters Judean territory, and comes upon Aiath, the Ai of *Joshua* vii. 2 and the Haiyân of to-day. Already he has left that little town and its tombs cut in the rock. Southward across the plain he passes to Migron, not the Migron of 1 *Samuel* xiv. 2, but Makrûn, on the road from Ai to Michmash. At Michmash, the Mukhmas of to-day, he will deposit his baggage to make his swoop the swifter and his crossing of the stream the easier, for the town is protected on the south by a deep valley, through which runs the Wadi es-Suwênît with steep sides, 1 *Samuel* xiii. 23, xiv. 4, 13. The soldiers encourage one another by crying, "Geba will be a lodging for us," that is, "we shall bivouac to-night in the pleasant place of Geba." This, the modern Jeba, at the top of the slope they are climbing, is indeed happily situated amid forests and wheat-fields. And as it is only seven miles from Jerusalem, they may find a moment's rest to gather themselves together before they spring on the prey.

So the Syriac and Latin Vulgates, followed by Knabenbauer, Knobel, Delitzsch, Driver, Duhm, and Marti, represent the words as those of the Assyrians. The Greek Vulgate, however, renders the words, "and he will come into Aggai." The Targum puts the sentence into the third person, reading "for them" in the place of "for us"; and in this it is followed by Lowth. Aben Ezra, followed by Alexander, the Revisers, and Whitehouse, explain the Hebrew *mālôn lánû* as "they lodged a lodging," that is "they lodged," the idea being expressed in the same form as the previous "they crossed a crossing," and the word *lánû* being traced to the verb *lîn*, "to lodge," "pass the night," itself from *láyil*,

“night.” But the objection to our rendering it “for us,” on the ground that such a meaning implies an abrupt change of construction is surely out of place in regard to such a hurried passage as this; and the fact that the word “Geba” is dwelt on as a shout makes it equivalent to a line, the line which precedes and the two which follow being each composed of only two words.

To the west of that road through Michmash and Geba, there is another by Ramah and through Gibeah. Ramah is the modern Ram, or er-Râm, the Arabic article *al* being assimilated to the initial *r* of the name. From Bethel southward over five miles of road, and passing Deborah’s palm, *Judges* iv. 5, the prophet foresees a detachment of the Assyrian army march upon Ramah. Noting the fear shown by the inhabitants, he picturesquely refers the trembling to the town itself. This is situated on the top of a white hill, 2600 feet above the sea-level. The name is derived from *rûm*, “to be lofty,” and generally, as here, has the article prefixed, for the place is “the height.” Here is Rachel’s sepulchre, *Jeremiah* xxxi. 15; and now, as in the Chaldean siege, *2 Kings* xxiv. 10, and in the massacre of the Holy Innocents, *Matthew*, ii. 18, we may well imagine the mother of Benjamin wailing for her children, whose territory included the whole road from Bethel to the Temple, exclusive of the Temple-courts. Jerusalem is only five miles from Ramah. Having left the height and marched two miles, the Assyrians reach Gibeah, the modern Tell-el-Fûl. The name “Gibeah” means a “hill,” so that “Gibeah of Saul” is simply the “hill of Saul,” as Josephus says in his *Wars*, V. ii. 1; and near it Titus will encamp in a time to come. In *1 Samuel* xiii. 2, and in the tragedy of the Levite’s concubine, *Judges* xx. 4, according to the true reading, the village was called Gibeah of Benjamin; but as



Saul's home, 1 *Samuel* x. 26, it is now known as Gibeah of Saul.

Still nearer comes the enemy, and reaches Gallim. The inhabitants are bidden to cry aloud. They are described as "Bath-Gallim," whether that be the name of the town, as the Targum supposes, or means "the daughter of Gallim." The word "Gallim" signifies "heaps"; but the town cannot be identified with the modern Beit Jala and its stone cairns, for these are south of Jerusalem, and the context implies a place on the north. It was the home of Palti, to whom Saul gave Michal, his own daughter and David's wife, but is at present undiscovered. Of Laishah, next in order, nothing definite is known; though some, like Conder, identify it with the modern village el-'Isāwīyeh, on the eastern side of a mountain to the north of Olivet.

That suggested site of Laishah is not an hour's walk from Anathoth, the modern 'Anātā, two and a half miles to the north-east of Jerusalem. Here at the Levitical city of Anathoth, the goddess 'Anāt had been worshipped. Indeed, the very name Anathoth is either a plural or other modification of 'Anāt, that is Anātu, spouse of the Babylonian Anu, god of Erech and of the sky. The goddess was represented on one Egyptian stele as helmeted, and holding a shield and javelin in her right hand, and a battle-axe in her left. No doubt she had been worshipped in Palestine, *Joshua* xv. 59, *Judges* i. 33; nor is that wonderful, considering that the name had been known in Egypt from the Eighteenth Dynasty at least and the time of the Amarna letters.

If we suppose Isaiah to stand on Scopus, Anathoth will lie at his feet. In days to come it will be the home of Jeremiah, priest and prophet, who will chant in saddest strain the full fulfilment of all the Tigris and Euphrates

hold of menace for Jerusalem. Isaiah, now and in vision, sees the Assyrian reach Madmenah, "a dunghill," and Gebim, "trenches," villages or towns of which a later age will know nothing. The enemy is almost at the wall of Jerusalem. To-day, in the vivid speech of the prophet, he will stand in Nob, that is most probably Scopus itself, the modern hill Ras el-Meshārif, a mile and a half south-west of Anathoth, and giving the Assyrian his first glimpse of Jerusalem and an opportunity of shaking his little fist against the City of God.

Now we may read and render the sixth strophe itself.

x. 28. He has come upon Aiath :

He has crossed in Migron.

He has entrusted his arms to Michmash :

29. They have crossed [the] crossing.

"Geba," [they cry],

"A lodging for us !"

Ramah has trembled :

Gibeah of Saul has fled.

30. Shout [with] thy voice,

Daughter of Gallim.

Attend, Laishah :

Answer her, Anathoth.

31. Madmenah has flown :

The inhabitants of the Gebim have secured [their own goods].

32. Again, to-day,

[He wills] to stand in Nob.

He will shake his hand

[Against] the mountain of the daughter of Zion,

[Against] the hill of Jerusalem.

As to "thy voice" in v. 30, Gesenius' *Grammar*, § 138, i.

3, justifies us in treating it as an accusative of the instrument, somewhat similar to the English "sound the timbrel," though *b*, "in" or "with," is sometimes used in such cases. The form of the Hebrew word rendered "shout" may be Qal, but it may also be regarded as Piel, the guttural having a strong dagesh implied, and the preceding páthach therefore remaining unlengthened. In the same verse, we do not adopt the Massoretic pointing of the consonants, so that they read 'ăniyyáh 'ănāthôth, "wretched Anathoth," but follow the Syriac Vulgate in pointing them, 'ăniyhā 'anāthôth, "answer her, Anathoth," for text and context are harmonious, when we suppose the people of Gallim urged to shout, Laishah to listen, and Anathoth to reply. Whichever reading we adopt, there is still the Isaian assonance as in the next line also, *nădh'dháh madhmēnáh*, "Madmenah has flown." In v. 32 we see no sufficient reason to exchange the present text for the conjecture in Cheyne's *Encyclopædia* iii. 3430, "he will stand in the hill of God." In the Hebrew, "he will shake" is a reduplicated form, the Piel of *nûph*, "to wave." In the second last line of the strophe, the Massoretes and the three Vulgates, Greek, Syriac, and Latin, read *bath*, "daughter of," but the Aramaic Targum follows the written text in reading *bēyth*, "house" or "temple of."

The seventh strophe is simply a brief conclusion to the song, but one full of meaning.

- x. 33. Behold the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts,  
Lopping foliage with terror.

And the [men who are] lofty of stature [are] hewn ;  
And the high ones will be humbled.

34. And He will cut down the thickets of the forest with the  
axe ;  
And the Lebanon will fall by a Noble One.



In Qal the Hebrew verb rendered “lopping” means “to divide.” The simple form gives us the noun for “cleft,” as in *Isaiah* ii. 21, lvii. 5, and “branch,” as in xvii. 6, xxvii. 10, from which in turn we have the Piel form, a “privative Piel,” “to cut off branches.” The word for “foliage,” *pu'ráh*, is from a root, *pā'ár*, which in its unused Qal form would mean to “adorn,” “be beautiful.” But some fifty Hebrew manuscripts, with Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus, read *púrúh*, “a winepress,” as in lxiii. 3, from *púr*, “to break.” And the third word in the same line has been the subject of some discussion. The root means “to fear” or “to frighten”; and the word itself signifies “terror.” Cheyne finely preserves the effect of the sound by translating it “crash,” but for the *‘ārātsáh*, some would unnecessarily read “an axe,” defying the ancient authorities and reducing Isaiah’s poetry to prose. We find the same poor criticism with regard to the last couplet of the strophe. Isaiah first tells of the devastation wrought by the iron axe, and, for parallel, predicts that wrought by the Noble One, Jehovah Himself. Yet some conjecture that we ought to abandon the word “Noble One” in favour of that for “with its cedars”; and others suggest we should read *bēqardóm*, “with a hatchet.” Doubtless, to the prosaic all things must be made prosaic.

In the seventh strophe or stanza, then, the Assyrians, pictured as lofty trees and high—indeed a very Lebanon with cedars lofty and lifted up, ii. 13—are doomed together with their rank and file, pictured as the thickets of the forest. So Ezekiel too, xxxi. 3, speaks of Sennacherib as a cedar of Lebanon. Looking upon all the leaders, Isaiah declares they will be lopped with terror, that is, with a terrible blow. They will be shorn of their foliage, pruned, humbled, cut down and felled with

the iron, that is, with the axe, and by a Noble One, ' *Addîr*, that is, Jehovah Himself, as in xxxiii. 21, *Psalms* lxxvi. 5, xciii. 4, for we cannot follow Alexander in supposing *addîr* to be merely descriptive of the iron, and to mean "a mighty axe." The verb rendered "cut down," *nigqaph*, is Piel and intensive, or, it may be, Niphal and passive, in which case we must explain its concord as a singular with the plural "thickets" by the fact that the verb precedes the noun, *Gesenius*, § 147. We may regard the subject "He" as referring directly to Jehovah, the "Noble" or "Majestic One" of the following line, or as an indefinite pronoun equivalent to "one," *Gesenius*, § 137, iii.

So the Assyrian legions are described as an advancing forest, quite other than the mimicry of Birnam wood by Malcolm's soldiers as they approach Macbeth's castle. Isaiah foresees real legions; and it is his inspired genius pictures them as a Lebanon, doomed to fall without resurrection. And since 607 B.C., the ruins of Nineveh have witnessed to the truth of the prediction. But with Israel it is otherwise, for there is the Remnant. As Delitzsch suggests, the Assyrian is like the cedar of Lebanon, for that tree felled never shoots again; but Israel is like the oak, for a rod or sucker will issue from the trunk of Jesse's fallen tree.

## CHAPTER XI

IN contrast to the fate of the Assyrian Lebanon stands that of the Davidic oak. Jesse's tree had been planted in David's accession about 1000 B.C.; and between that date and the present year, 734 B.C., Solomon in 960, Rehoboam in 931, Abijah in 915, Asa in 913, Jehoshaphat in 873, Jehoram in 849, Ahaziah in 842, Joash in 837 after Athaliah's five years' spell of power, Amaziah in 798, Uzziah in 790, Jotham in 740, and Ahaz in 735 had followed in regular succession. On the other hand, Northern Israel has already had eight dynasties, first that of Jeroboam, 931 and Nadab, 910; secondly, that of Baasha, 909, and Elah; thirdly, that of Zimri in 885; fourthly, and in the same year, that of Omri, Ahab, 874, and his sons Ahaziah, 853, and Joram, 852; fifthly, that of Jehu, 842, Jehoahaz, 815, Jehoash, 799, Jeroboam II., 784, Zechariah, 744; sixthly, and in the same year, that of Shallum; seventhly, that of Menahem, also in the same year, and Pekahiah, 736; and eighthly, that of Pekah, 735, the present occupant. The next king, Hoshea, will be the last.

Such a comparison of the Southern with the Northern Kingdom might indeed have impressed men with a sense of Jerusalem's security; but it is idle to suggest that it gave Isaiah the theme for his next song. He is about to compare not Israel and Judah, but the Assyrians and the Davidic dynasty, the doom of the hostile empire and the future of the Messianic kingdom. Hardly has he



described the fall of the Assyrian forest, when he again lifts up his voice in song to announce the upspringing of the Messianic sapling from the stripped trunk of Jesse's tree. He will sing of Messiah, and not of Him only, but of His kingdom also, and of His gathering the dispersed Israelites, of Palestine at peace, and of the new Exodus and Entry into the Holy Land. The first of the five strophes is devoted to Messiah. The Spirit of Jehovah gives Him wisdom to understand things, intelligence to distinguish between things, counsel to decide, might to act, knowledge of God, and fear or reverence of Him.

- xi. 1. And a shoot will issue from the stump of Jesse;  
And a sprout will bud from his roots.
2. And the Spirit of Jehovah will rest upon Him,  
The Spirit of wisdom and intelligence,  
The Spirit of counsel and might,  
The Spirit of knowledge and the fear of Jehovah.
3. And His delight [will be] in the fear of Jehovah;  
And He will not judge [according] to the seeing of His  
eyes;  
And He will not decide [according] to the hearing of  
His ears.
4. And He will judge feeble men in justice;  
And He will decide with uprightness for the humble  
ones of earth.  
And He will smite earth with the club of His mouth;  
And He will slay a wicked one with the breath of His  
lips.
5. And justice will be the girdle of His flanks;  
And faithfulness the girdle of His hips.

It may be well to deal first with the text, and to point out that we follow the Vulgate versions and the parallelism in reading "will push forth" or "bud" instead of the Massoretic "will fruit." The difference is between

*yiphrách* and *yiphreh*; and *chêth* and *hē* are easily confused by a reader. No argument on the point can be drawn from Isaiah's vocabulary in this matter, the former verb being found six times in the book, and the latter four times. But we do not feel at liberty to follow the Vulgate versions in their reading "the fear of Jehovah will fill Him," or "rest in Him," that is, *henîach bô*, a Hiphil form of *nîach*, "to rest," instead of *hăřîchô b'*, "He will cause the fear of Jehovah to rest in Him," because the new reading would merely repeat the previous "The Spirit of Jehovah will rest upon Him"; because those versions here seem rather to interpret than to translate; and because the Massoretic reading perfectly supplies the parallel.

The verse is a triplet expressing the perfection of Messiah's decisions. As the second line says, these will not depend on outward appearance; and the third, that they will not be based on mere hearsay; so the first describes the fear of Jehovah as directing Messiah's "smelling" or perception, the sense of smelling being put for perception in general, as indeed our own word "apprehending" refers not only to objects of the muscular sense, but is extended to visible things and the objects of the other senses, and even to those of the intellect itself. The Hebrew word is really the Hiphil or causative infinitive of *nîach*, "to breathe"; and that form means "to smell," then as in *Judges* xvi. 9, "to feel"; and finally, when followed by the preposition *b*, "to smell with pleasure," "to delight in." So Messiah is said to delight in the fear of Jehovah. He delights in those who fear God, and is not to be swayed by appearance or hearsay.

Again, with regard to the word for "meek" or "humble ones," some conjecture that *yôdh* should be read for *waw*,

that is, we should change the Hebrew word, which implies "poverty in spirit" or religious resignation, into that for those literally poor or "wretched ones." The Massoretes themselves suggest a similar change in xxxii. 7, their omission to do so in the present place being therefore an argument against the conjecture.

Then in the sentence, "He will smite earth," Krochmal, Lagarde, Cheyne, and Briggs, against both the Massoretic text and the Versions, would alter the word for "earth" into that for "a terrible one" or "tyrant." The change is urged on the ground that the word "earth" has been copied by mistake from the previous line, and that "earth" and "a wicked one" do not afford such a parallelism as "the feeble" and "the humble ones" of the previous couplet. But it was not necessary for Isaiah to write poetry mechanically; and the contrast between the destruction of the earth and that of an individual emphasises the universal and the particular activities of God's judgment, as well as expressing its completeness. The Targum indeed explains the "wicked one" of Armilus, the Anti-Messiah or Anti-Christ; and St. Paul illustrates the full reference of these words when he uses them of Anti-Christ and the Final Judgment, 1 *Thessalonians* iii. 8.

We may note that the third line of the second verse carries us back to Immanuel's titles in ix. 5, the "Spirit of Counsel" suggesting the "Counsellor," and the "Spirit of Might" recalling the "Mighty One." The "Club" "or Mace of His Mouth" indicates the terrible power of Messiah's word, that can destroy as well as create. The "Breath of His Lips" is another description of Messiah's speech. It may be hardly necessary to add that the Hebrew word for "breath" is the same as that for "spirit."



The last line of the second verse contains an interesting point of grammar. The Hebrew word for "knowledge" is ambiguous, its absolute and construct forms being the same, so that we may render it "knowledge" or the "knowledge of." Therefore the phrase means either "The spirit of knowledge and the fear of Jehovah," or "The Spirit of the knowledge of and of the fear of Jehovah." The latter is ruled out by the fact that the Hebrew supposes but one governing noun to one governed, according to Gesenius, *Grammar*, § 114, such cases as those of 1 *Samuel* xxviii. 7, *Isaiah* xxxvii. 22, *Jeremiah* xiv. 17, xxvi. 9 and 11, being explained as constructions of two governing nouns in apposition. So the word "Jehovah" cannot be governed by both words "knowledge" and "fear." The word for "knowledge" therefore is not in the construct but in the absolute form. But, since two governing nouns can follow in succession if they depend on each other, there is no grammatical objection to interpreting the phrase as "The Spirit of knowledge and [the Spirit of] the fear of Jehovah"; and this would accord with the form of the preceding line, "The Spirit of counsel and [the Spirit of] might."

In conclusion, it is interesting to note that the word "His delight," as Schürer points out in his *History of the Jewish People*, II. xxix. 12, suggested to the Talmudists, *Sanhedrin* 93b, that God would load Messiah with commandments and reproofs like mill-stones. Those teachers, therefore, in spite of all said to the contrary, seem to have expected a suffering Messiah.

The second strophe or stanza passes from Messiah to His kingdom.

- xi. 6. And wolf will sojourn with lamb;  
And spotted [leopard] will recline with kid.

And calf and young lion and fatling [will feed] together ;  
And a little lad [will be] leading them.

7. And heifer and bear will feed ;  
And their bairns will recline together ;  
And lion will eat crushed-straw like the ox.
8. And suckling will play on the den of the cobra ;  
And weanling [will have] stretched his hand over the  
cave of the serpent.
9. They [the animals] will not do evil, and they will not  
corrupt  
In all My holy mountain.  
  
For knowledge as to Jehovah has filled the earth,  
As the waters [are] covering the seas.

This stanza is a fine illustration of the freedom in Isaiah's style. In x. 28-32, he selected some towns on the road an enemy might travel, and Sennacherib will travel, to impress the people of Jerusalem with a sense of their danger. Now the prophet selects animals to symbolise and emphasise the peace of the Messianic kingdom. St. Jerome inveighs against those who, like St. Irenæus, *Against Heresies*, v. 33, and Lactantius, *Institutiones*, vii. 24, read the prophecy literally. Yet some in more modern times have supported that millenarian and chiliast view on the ground that *Romans* viii. 21 implies such a change in the nature of animals. St. Paul, however, is really urging the deliverance of creatures from the abuses to which they are subjected at the hands of fallen man, and from the curse which smote the earth at the Fall. He announces the glorification of the creature, not a change of nature. It is one thing to transform a nature into its opposite; it is quite another to elevate that nature to a higher and nobler form of activity. Sin did not change the nature of things, nor will the deliverance from sin.

A literal interpretation would involve us in many absurdities; but a metaphorical and figurative one may be harmonious and inclusive of all the facts. The fierce animals are hostile men, as in xv. 9, where the lion symbolises a ferocious enemy. The "holy mountain," as the centre of the ancient theocracy, symbolises the kingdom of Messiah. And in the final couplet, the word rendered "earth" may indeed mean "the land," that is, the "Holy Land"; but since it also means the earth in the wider sense, it indicates the universality of the Messianic or Christian kingdom.

As it is not intended to be taken literally, the song is not a mere dream; nor may it be called one of Israel's castles in the air, or, to use the language of G. A. Smith, in his *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, p. 35, one of her "visions of another world that are too evidently the refuges of her despair in this." It is fine, perfectly sane poetry, depicting the peace, which will reign when the Assyrian and the Egyptian and the Israelite will be at one, xix. 24; and it looks off still further to a day of universal peace. Nor is it without significance that the Roman altar of peace was founded on the 4th of July, 14 B.C.; that within a year, the Roman Temple of Janus, ever open in time of war, was closed for the third time, and on account of the Roman and Augustan peace, and that a few years later, Messiah came.

Yet the peace Isaiah announces implies more than that which will prepare the way for Messiah. It is the peace Messiah will create through His Church. Then the peacemakers will be blessed, *Matthew* c. v. 9; and Messiah's peace will rest upon His own people, *John* xiv. 27. But it will be a peace through victory, and will depend on both Messiah's overcoming the world, *John* xvi. 33, and His people's endurance of the persecuting sword, *Matthew*



x. 34, and Satan's malice, *Ephesians* vi. 12. Very gradually the Catholic peace will gain sovranity over the world, but it will be found even in the state of the infant Church, as the oak in the acorn.

Further, we may note how this prophecy will influence subsequent thought. In that portion of the *Jewish Sibyllines*, which was written most probably by an Alexandrian Jew about 168 B.C., in the time of the Maccabees, we read :

- iii. 652. Then from the sun, God will send a king,  
Who will make fatal war to cease on the whole earth,  
Slaying some, and making a firm alliance with the  
others.

And again :

- iii. 702. All the sons of the great God, around the Temple,  
Will live in peace, rejoicing in what  
The Creator will give them.

Then there are the *Psalms of Solomon*, written originally in Hebrew by Palestinian Pharisees soon after Pompey's siege of Jerusalem in 63 B.C., and his death. The seventeenth of these Psalms describes the Messianic kingdom in the days when the Messiah

- xvii. 35. Will smite the earth with the word of His mouth  
for ever.

Those words indeed refer to *Isaiah* xi. 4. They are followed almost immediately by what seems to be another definite allusion :

- xvii. 39. His hope is in the Lord,  
And who can [prevail] against Him ?  
40. He is strong in His works,  
And mighty in the fear of God.

Later still, there is another passage of the *Jewish*

*Sibyllines.* This belongs to a section written in the time of the First Triumvirate, 40-30 B.C., by an Alexandrian Jew. Translating five of its lines from an emended text, we read :

- iii. 46. But when Rome will also reign over Egypt,  
         While she still lingers, then indeed the very great  
                 kingdom  
         Of an immortal King will appear to men.  
         A pure Ruler will come to control the whole earth's  
                 sceptres  
         Unto all ages of hurrying time.

The Isaian prophecy appears to have reached Vergil indirectly. In his fourth Eclogue, he claims to quote from the thousand Sibylline verses the Romans had collected forty years before; and he announces that the prophecy of the Cumæan Sibyl is about to be fulfilled in that very year 40 B.C., during the consulship of Pollio, whom he salutes in these words :

In the time of thy rule, if any traces of our guilt remain,  
 Their effacement will release the land from continual dread.

That guilt, no doubt, refers to the civil wars. But Vergil sang of the child to be born that—

He will receive the life of the gods; and among the gods  
         he will see  
 Heroes mingled; and he will be seen of them;  
 And with the virtues of his fathers, he will rule a world at  
         peace.

Further :

The very goats bring home udders large with milk;  
 And the herds do not fear the great lions.  
 The very cradle will produce attractive flowers for thee;  
 The serpent also will die; and the treacherous poison-plant  
         will die.

Some words in the Isaian strophe now demand attention. In the third line, we followed the Greek Vulgate

in supplying the verb "will feed," though the "will dwell" of the Latin Vulgate is equally good. Condamin suggests we should replace the word for "fatling" by one equivalent to "will feed"; but unfortunately for that conjecture, both the Greek and Latin Vulgates represent the word for "fatling," and also supply a verb. For the verb "will feed" in the first line of v. 7, that is, *tir 'éynah* from *rā'áh*, "to feed," some would substitute the Hithpael or reflexive, *tithra'éynah*, "will hold intercourse," found in *Proverbs* xxii. 24. But that form ought to be followed by *ēth*, and is ruled out by the Greek and Latin Vulgates, which agree with the Masoretic Hebrew text. Indeed it is time we expressed our concurrence with the younger Delitzsch in his attitude towards such conjectures. In his second lecture on "Babel and Bible," he asserts that "Assyriology has re-established the credit of *The Tradition of the Old Testament Text*, which has so long and so fiercely been assailed." And with regard to disputed words and phrases, he proceeds to say, "how fatal a mistake it has been for modern exegesis to quibble about such rare words and difficult passages, to 'emend' them, and only too often to substitute platitudes." Driver, too, in his *Schweich Lectures*, p. 11, acknowledges that "some writers are far too ready with this potent but perilous restorative," that is, conjecture; and he draws attention to Kenyon's finding, that the papyri of classical texts confirm the emendations of editors only to a limited extent.

We have rendered the second line of v. 7 as

And their bairns will recline together.

We have used the word "bairns," because the Hebrew word is the poetical form for "son," and because we have already so translated the same word, in ix. 5, to represent



the assonance in the original of "a bairn has been born to us."

When it is said in v. 8, that a suckling child will play on the cobra's den, the word "play" is a Pilpel or reduplicated form of *shā'á*, "to stroke," or "smooth," and means, "to play" or "enjoy oneself." We use the word "cobra," as the kind of serpent, whatever it may be, is represented elsewhere as very venomous and as employed by snake-charmers, *Psalm* lviii. 5. Nor can we tell what kind is intended in the next line, so it is better to render it "serpent" simply. Aquila and the Targum, with the Syriac and Latin Vulgates, regard it as the fabulous king-serpent, the basilisk, or basiliskos, "a little king," which Pliny, viii. 21, tells us was found in African deserts, and was covered with bright spots, those on the head resembling a crown. The preceding word we have rendered "cave" in accordance with the parallelism and the three Vulgates, and because we regard it as the ordinary word for "cave," the *áyin* having been softened to *áleph*. Some, however, as Gesenius in his *Thesaurus*, ingeniously enough suggest that the word *m'úráh* is derived from *'ór*, "light," and means a hole or aperture for light, that is, the opening through which light passes into the serpent's den. Delitzsch and others adopt the more striking, but still less probable suggestion of the Targum, Saadia, Kimchi, and Aben Ezra, that the word is the feminine form *má'ór*, which may mean "light" as in "the light of the eyes," *Proverbs* xv. 30, or "a candlestick," *Exodus* xxv. 6, or generally that which gives light, a luminary, *Genesis* i. 14, 15; and from this they argue that it really means the serpent's "eye-ball."

In the third line of v. 9, the word for "knowledge," *dē'áh*, is a feminine form of *déa'*, an infinitive of *yādá'* "to know," used as a noun; and like an infinitive, it is

followed by an accusative, the case here being indicated by *eth*-. The phrase "knowing Jehovah" is of course equivalent to "knowledge of Jehovah." So far the matter is quite simple. But Houbigant, followed by Condamin, suggests that the *eth*- is all that survives of the word *w'yir'áth*, "and the fear of," so that the original reading was "the knowledge and the fear of Jehovah." It will be sufficient to say that the Massoretic text is supported by the Greek and Latin Vulgates, and that Houbigant is driven to base his conjecture on the Targum or Aramaic paraphrase, which reads "the knowledge of the fear of Jehovah."

The first strophe or stanza told of Messiah, and the second of His Kingdom. The third will now tell how the Gentile nations and the faithful Jews will be gathered into the Kingdom from the four quarters of the earth. The Kingdom therefore will be universal, and will preserve continuity and unity with the older dispensation by the common element of the Remnant. Previously Isaiah, iv. 2, had announced

iv. 2. In that Day, there will be the Shoot of Jehovah  
For splendour and for glory.

And the fruit of the earth [will be] for sublimity and for  
ornament  
For the escaped of Israel.

Now he tells how "the Shoot of Jehovah" and "the fruit of the earth," defined more clearly as "Jesse's root," will become a standard and ensign to gather the nations. And this, the third strophe, is in three parts, the first, v. 10, foretelling the ingathering of the nations, the second, v. 11, that of the Jewish Remnant, and the third, v. 12, embracing both.

The Remnant, we shall see, will be gathered from

Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and the isles of the sea. Some hold that so wide a dispersion implies a date after the Exile. Others argue that the passage must have been written after Sargon's capture of Samaria in 722, and his transportation of 27,200 captives to Halah and to Habor, the river of Gozan, and to the cities of the Medes, 2 *Kings* xvii. 6, that is, to the Khalakhkha of the cuneiforms and near Haran, to the river Habor, which flows from Mount Masius, or Karej Dagħ, into the Euphrates at Karkeseea, and to the land lying west and south of the Caspian, and possibly including the whole country of Media, Persia, and Elam between the Caspian and the Persian Gulf.

But we propose to show that the description of the dispersion would not be inconsistent with Isaiah's outlook in the year 734. The prophet certainly looks beyond the present and the immediate future; and it is natural enough he will take account of the dispersions to follow the disasters he has predicted. Already, we have seen the prophet moved by the devastation of Naphtali and Zebulon, and by the deportation of their inhabitants to Assyria, viii. 23, 2 *Kings* xv. 29. As to Egypt, Hosea, ix. 3, has already announced, or now announces, a return of Israel to it, and a second exile there. This is given in more detail by Isaiah, who adds Pathros, that is, Pe-to-rêś, "the land of the south," the Thebáís, from Acanthus, a few miles south of Memphis, to the first cataract. He looks still farther off, and sees Cush, southward from the first cataract, the land of the Ethiopians. Already, about 926 B.C., these peoples, under the Libyan Shishak, or Sheshonq I, had invaded Judah, 1 *Kings* xiv. 25, and taken captives, 2 *Chronicles* xii. 4.

Then Elam or the "highland," east of Tigris and north of the Persian Gulf, would strike the hearers of



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Isaiah as a place very far off; and the mention of it would add emphasis to Isaiah's warnings regarding the future dispersion and its extent. Besides, if Sargon in 722 B.C. will plant inhabitants of Samaria in Media, south of the Caspian, there is nothing extravagant in supposing that Tiglath-pileser III, in this year 734, has already sent some Israelites captives to Elam. There is less difficulty as to Shinar, that is, Babylonia, *Genesis* x. 10. Hamath we found at the northern foot of Lebanon; and the isles of the sea are the Mediterranean shores; but with regard to these, there is no difficulty whatever. Elam is the real hinge of the question. Now Amos, already under Jeroboam II, and about 760 B.C., had threatened Damascus with transportation as far as Kir, which we gather from xxii. 6 to have been in the neighbourhood of Elam, and east of the Middle Tigris. This prophecy of Amos, Tiglath-pileser III will actually fulfil in 732, *2 Kings* xvi. 9. And it can hardly be regarded as straining the doctrine of inspired prophecy to suppose that Isaiah, foreseeing the disasters and the consequent dispersions, could also foresee the wide extent of those dispersions, especially as distant exile had been announced in vi. 12, and threatened in *Deuteronomy* xxx. 1.

Further, many Israelites had become captives in foreign lands, as, for example, Mesha's "Moabite Stone" proves. And often the Phœnicians, as Rawlinson, in his *History of Phœnicia*, p. 296, argues from *Joel* iii. 6, "bought such Jews as were taken captive and sold into slavery by the neighbouring nations. That traffic in slaves flourished at Gaza about 760 B.C., as we gather from *Amos* i. 6; and such traffic would involve a wide dispersion of the slaves.

Before considering particular words, it will be well to translate the whole strophe or stanza, noting again

the reference of v. 10. to the nations, of v. 11 to the Remnant, and of v. 12 to both.

xi. 10. And it will be in that day,  
The root of Jesse—who [is] standing for an ensign of  
the people—

To Him nations will [go to] inquire ;  
And His resting-place will be glory.

11. And it will be in that day,  
The Lord will again a second time [put] His hand  
To acquire the Remnant of His people,  
Who will remain

From Assyria and from Egypt  
And from Pathros and from Cush

And from Elam and from Shinar  
And from Hamath and from the isles of the sea.

12. And He will lift up an ensign for the nations ;  
And He will collect the expelled [men] of Israel.

And He will gather the scattered [women] of Judah  
From the four wings of the earth.

We still move within the circle of ideas characteristically Isaianic; and the change of metaphor from “the sprout from the roots” of v. 1, to the root itself, is characteristic of the prophet. In the present passage the word “root,” as Kimchi held, may illustrate the figure of speech, metonymy, as it may mean a shoot from the root or root-shoot; or perhaps, more exactly and literally it means the root that is now the sole surviving representative of the lopped and hewn tree of Jesse. From this strophe, the word went forth as a title of Messiah: and we find it as “the root from dry ground” in liii. 2; “a root unto David” in *Ecclesiasticus*, xlvii. 25, and “the root of David” in *Revelation* c.v. 5, and xxii. 16. The last passage indeed combines

both Isaian metaphors, recording our Lord's title as "the root and the offspring of David." Jesse's Root and David's is indeed Jesse's Branch and David's, as David's Lord is truly David's Son.

The word *nēs*, "ensign," is from *nāsás*, "to lift up," and so means literally "a standard" and metaphorically "a sign." In v. 20, an ensign called the nations to execute judgment on Judah, but Jesse's Root summons them now to the kingdom of grace. The word for "inquire," *dārāsh*, is primarily to "thrash," "tread," then "to go to," "to seek," and finally "to seek some one to inquire of him as of an oracle," viii. 19, xix. 3, and *Deuteronomy* xviii. 11. So the verb here implies that Messiah will be the Teacher of the Nations. As to the word for "His resting-place," *m'nuchāthô*, it is explained by the Targum "as the place of His dwelling." The Greek Vulgate rendered it "His rest." The Greek noun *anápausis* came to mean "rest from something," "cessation," and even "death," because the corresponding Greek verb in the middle voice came to mean "to cease from something," then "to sleep," and finally "to sleep in death." Hence the word in the text is referred to our Lord's death by Eusebius of Cæsarea, who died before 341; by Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia from 392 to 428; and by St. Cyril of Alexandria, who died in 444 A.D. St. Jerome, who completed the Latin Vulgate from the Hebrew in 405, adopted the same view. "To make the sense plain to the reader," as he says, he uses "another word instead of 'sleeping' and 'rest,' but of the same meaning," and renders the Hebrew "as sepulchre." Here, therefore, and as Knabenbauer points out, in xvi. 1, *Habakkuk* iii. 18, and *Daniel* ix. 26, we find St. Jerome's interpretation inserted in the Latin Vulgate.

Further, "the resting-place will be glory." This seems



to have some reference to iv. 5, and its picture of Jerusalem with pillars of fire and smoke on every dwelling and establishment, each glory being canopied with the Divine protection. At all events, in both places, the basis of the Divine metaphor is the Exodus. So in the present passage, the word for a "second time," v. 11, looks back to the deliverance from Egypt. Some indeed suggest that this word, *shēnîth*, ought to be omitted in favour of *s'ēth*, the construct infinitive of *nāsá'*, "to lift up," because the Greek Vulgate offers a literal rendering, which we may translate literally into English "as the Lord will add to show His hand," that is, "The Lord will again show His hand." But it would be rash to omit the word on the evidence of the Greek Vulgate alone, as it would be very difficult to explain its presence in the Massoretic Text, the Latin Vulgate, and other authorities. Besides, the Greek Vulgate blunders in this very passage, since it treats the word *qnóth*, not as the Qal or simple construct infinitive of *qānáh*, to "acquire," "possess," but as the Piel or intensive construct infinitive *qannéh*, "to be zealous for," though the latter verb in this sense is followed by the preposition *l*, and not as here by the accusative.

In v. 12, we note that the ingathering of the nations precedes the saving of the Jewish Remnant. Therefore St. Paul seeks an earlier salvation for the Jews by hastening the Gentile harvest, *Romans* xi. 13, 14. This connection and this relation of time between the arriving of the nations and that of the faithful Jews are maintained by Isaiah to the end—for example, in xlix. 22, lx. 3, 4, lxii. 10, 11, lxvi. 12. The salvation of the nations will be followed by that of the chosen nation, both Israel and Judah, men and women. The word for the "expelled" is the masculine plural of the Niphal or passive participle, the daghesh here, but not in *Jeremiah*

xlix. 36, being omitted from the *dáleth*, because of the following guttural. The word for “the scattered of” is the feminine plural of the Qal passive participle. Here, as in iii. 1, both genders are combined to express totality. Gesenius indeed goes further, and speaks of the construction as an example of *merismus* or *parallage elliptica*, as in xviii. 6, *Zechariah* ix. 17, and *Proverbs* x. 1. That is to say, the masculine word is found in the one clause and the feminine in the other grammatically; but according to the sense, both masculine and feminine forms belong to both clauses.

The first strophe foretold Messiah, the second His kingdom, and the third its universality. Now the fourth will announce its unity. The political face of the Holy Land appears altered and calm; but that feature of the prophecy and the conquest of the neighbouring nations, when read in the light of the whole song, speak of a Catholic peace, a Catholic unity, and a Catholic sovereignty.

xi. 13. And the envy of Ephraim will depart;  
And the oppressors of Judah will be cut off.

Ephraim will not envy Judah;  
And Judah will not oppress Ephraim.

14. And they will fly [down] upon the shoulder of the  
Philistines seawards:

Together they will spoil the sons of the east.

Edom and Moab [will be a prey for] the sending forth  
their hand;

And the sons of Ammon will be their obedience.

The prophet tells first of peace established between Judah and Ephraim. The Ten Tribes, often named Israel, are also known as Ephraim, because the descendants of Joseph's second son, Ephraim, became the dominant body in the nation. It was Ephraim that

helped to make Ish-bosheth king after Saul's death, 2 *Samuel* ii. 9, and through Jeroboam originated the secession of the Ten Tribes after Solomon's death, 1 *Kings* xi. 26.

It is to be noted that the phrase, "the oppressors of Judah," in v. 13, does not mean "the oppressors [of Ephraim] in Judah," although Kimchi's assertion has been adopted by Gesenius, Ewald, Knobel, Reinke, and Cheyne. It is quite clear that "the oppressors of a righteous man," *Amos* c. v. 12, and "the oppressors of the Jews," *Esther* iii. 10, mean those oppressing a righteous man and the Jews. The genitive is objective, not subjective. So the first couplet in v. 13, is synonymous, both lines speaking of those opposed to Judah. The second couplet, however, regards Judah also as active; and the parallelism balances Ephraim and Judah in mutual friendship.

The next verse, 14, considers the neighbouring nations, Philistines, nomad Arabians, Edom, Moab, and Ammon. Of united Israel, both Ephraim and Judah, the kingdom of Samaria and that of Jerusalem, it is said that the people will fly down on the shoulder of the Philistines to the sea. The shoulder or *kathébbh* is the name of the land as it slopes down towards the coast. The word is used in *Deuteronomy* xxxiii. 12, and possibly of the western and eastern spurs, on which Jerusalem is built. In the prophetic past tense, it is said, "He dwelt between his shoulders." In *Joshua* xv. 8, the word means a mountain side in the phrase "to the shoulder of the Jebusite," as in v. 10, "the shoulder of the mountain of Jearim," and in v. 11, "the shoulder of Ekron." We should have expected the construct form *kéthebbh*, but Delitzsch explains the form here and the similar pointings before the preposition *b* in c. v. 2 and x. 15, by a desire for a firm and clear enunciation of the prefix.



That preposition *b* indicates the goal of the flight ; as it means “against” in *Genesis* xvi. 12, and after verbs of fighting, *Exodus* i. 10, of being angry, *Habakkuk* iii. 8, and of revolting, *Isaiah* i. 2. So the sentence really means united Israel will fly and swoop like a bird of prey on the Philistine land, that slopes down seawards, that is, westwards. The mention of the west suggests the east, whether by Hamilton’s law of contrast in the association of ideas, or by the older scholastic principle that “contraries are of the same kind” or “genus,” or by the still older principle of antithesis in the parallelism of Hebrew poetry. But it must be understood that the mode in which words are suggested by rhetoric or documents in no way militates against the Catholic doctrine of inspiration, for God is still the Author of the thoughts and the Guide in the prophet’s choice of words. Here, however, we should note that if there is a contrast between west and east, none the less there are similar and synonymous elements. The spoiling corresponds to the flying, and confirms our interpretation of that word as swooping.

Together Northern and Southern Israel will spoil the sons of the east, that is, the tribes who wander in Arabia Petræa, Arabia Felix, the east of the Jordan, and even in Mesopotamia, as we may see by comparing such passages as *Genesis* xxix. 1, *Judges* vi. 3, vii. 12, viii. 10, 1 *Kings* iv. 30, *Jeremiah* xlix. 28, and *Ezekiel* xxv. 4, 10. Edom, the “red,” includes the red sandstone cliffs of Mount Seir, south of the Dead Sea. Moab, as large as Hampshire, lay north of Edom and west of the Dead Sea ; while east and north of Moab lived the people of Ammon. As to these countries, Edom and Moab will be [objects for] the sending forth of Israel’s hand, that is to say, they will be seized by Israel’s hand, as *Amos*, ix. 12, had already

prophesied of Edom. And Ammon will be subject to Israel and Judah, the Hebrew word meaning literally "their obedience," an abstract form for the concrete "their obedient ones," and used in 2 *Samuel* xxiii. 23 for those attending in the audience-chamber.

The fourth strophe therefore indicates that the Catholic kingdom of Messiah, of which the universality and unity have already appeared, will be supreme in dominion, its ancient enemies having been vanquished. The fifth and concluding strophe or stanza compares the future deliverance to the historic crossing of the Red Sea. But to make the picture accord with the ingathering from north and south, from both Assyria and Egypt, it must represent both the River Euphrates and the Egyptian Sea as dried up. And in reading the strophe, we note that "the tongue of the Sea of Egypt" is not "the tongue of the Sea" mentioned in *Joshua* xv. 5, the latter being "at the end of the Jordan," at the northern extremity of the Dead Sea, and the former being the Gulf of Suez.

xi. 15. And Jehovah will devote [to destruction] the tongue of  
the Sea of Egypt ;

And He will shake His Hand against the River  
[Euphrates] with the force of His wind.

And He will smite it into seven streams ;

And He will cause [them] to make their way [through  
it] dryshod.

16. And there will be a highway for the Remnant of His  
people,

Who will remain from Assyria,

According as there was for Israel,

In the day of his going up from the land of Egypt.

In the first line, it has been suggested that we should read *hechĕrĭbh*, "He will dry up," as in l. 2, instead of

*hechĕrím*, "He will ban," "place under a ban," "devote [to God or to destruction]," "set apart [for good or for evil]." The latter word is derived, like *haram*, "a sacred place," or "a woman's apartment," from *chārám*, "to enclose"; and it is used on the "Moabite Stone," line 17, to describe the fate of the Israelites taken at Nebo, and fourteen times in the *Book of Joshua* with regard to the destruction of the Canaanites and their possessions. It has been suggested that "dry up" would be more natural and more suggestive of the Exodus, and would have the support of the Greek Vulgate as well as countenance from the Aramaic Targum or paraphrase and the Syriac Vulgate. But, on the other hand, the Massoretic text contains a fine figure, balanced in the parallel line by the shaking of Jehovah's Hand. The verb is found again in xxxiv. 2, and xxxvii. 11, and is supported in the present place by Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus. Indeed, the Greek Vulgate, in its rendering the word as "desolate," that is, "dry up," although it is followed by the Latin Vulgate, seems to offer rather a prosaic interpretation than the original poetry.

In v. 15, the shaking of Jehovah's Hand against the Euphrates recalls the vain shaking of the Assyrian's hand against Mount Zion, x. 32. The phrase "with the force of His wind" is the subject of much dispute. Saadia held it to mean "with His scorching wind." The second word may mean "wind" or "breath," according to the context or a parallel passage. The first word is only found in the present place; and we must determine whether it implies "force" or "heat." The narrative in *Exodus* xiv. 21 suggests we should translate the first word by "force" and the second by "wind," for it reads, "And Moses stretched out his hand upon the sea; and Jehovah caused the sea to go [back] by a strong east



wind all the night." And the rendering of the first word by "force" is supported by the three Vulgates, Greek, Latin, and Syriac. Luzzatto, indeed, suggested that the word, as it stood originally, was *ōtsem*, "strength," but received its present form *ʾăyām* through a substitution of *yôdh* for *tsāddê*, the two letters being somewhat alike in the older Hebrew alphabet. On the other hand, a similar Arabic word implies heat; but this is not enough to outweigh the evidence for translating the Hebrew word by "force."

The Hebrew word for "dryshod" is literally "in the sandals" or "shoes." It implies that the people pass through the river-bed without even the need of baring their feet. The highway means a public road, embanked, cast up and elevated. It has been questioned whether "from Assyria" belongs to "a highway" or to "will remain," that is, whether the prophet speaks of "a highway from Assyria" or of a Remnant that "will remain from Assyria." And indeed the construction is ambiguous but by means of the similar expression in v. 11 we determine the meaning to be "will remain from Assyria."

It seems clear then that the prophet's outlook includes the final ingathering of Israel; and in describing his view of the future, he speaks poetically and figuratively, not in a strictly literal fashion. To heighten interest in his picture, as well as to suggest the constancy of God's ways with Israel, he illustrates the future deliverance by that of the Exodus.

## CHAPTER XII

THE Deliverance at the Red Sea, *Exodus* xiv., was followed by the Triumph Song of Moses and Israel, *Exodus* xv. So Isaiah, having foretold the Second Deliverance, c. xi., adds a Song of Thanksgiving, c. xii. And the analogy is the more evident in that the prophet borrows expressions from the earlier song.

It has been said that the chapter contains two songs, the one marked by the singular number, and the other by the plural. The former, however, contains the plural in the last couplet; and the latter not only carries on the theme of the former, but also contains the singular in the last verse and in regard to Zion. We may argue that the singular refers to the Remnant and the plural to the nations. At the same time, we distinguish two strophes, the first announcing the salvation, and the second describing its effect.

The first line simply introduces the song.

xii. 1. And thou wilt say in that day—

I will thank Thee, Jehovah,  
Because [though] Thou wast wroth with me,  
Thy wrath will return,  
And Thou wilt comfort me.

2. Behold, God [is] my Salvation :  
I will trust, and I will not fear.

For my strength and song [is] Jah Jehovah ;  
And He will become Salvation for me.

And you will draw water in joy  
From the wells of the Salvation.

The verb “thank” is the Hiphil or causative of *yādháh*, “to throw,” and means to acknowledge, to praise, and to give thanks with extended hands. The conjunction “because” is not limited to the sentence “Thou wast wroth with me,” but introduces an explanation of the praise on the ground of the wrath removed and the comfort given. The difficulty arises from the placing of the sentences paratactically, that is, co-ordinately or side by side, without a conjunction to show their relation. We remove the difficulty by inserting the word “though” after “because.” In St. Paul’s *Epistle to the Romans*, vi. 17, there is the same need of regarding the whole statement and not merely the words immediately following the conjunction “because.”

But thanks be to God,  
Because you were slaves of sin,  
But you obeyed from the heart  
[The] pattern of doctrine, to which you were delivered.

The sentence, “Thy wrath will return” looks back to c. v. 25, and to the announcement made in the days of Jotham :

In all this His wrath has not returned ;  
And His hand is still outstretched.

Those words became the refrain of an Isaian song, ix. 11, 16, 20 ; x. 4, when Tiglath-pileser was marching on Gaza. And now when the Assyrian is returning to his home, they are changed into a thanksgiving for the return of God’s wrath from its mission of vengeance.

In the same sentence, “Thy wrath will return,” the verb *yāshóbbh* is the shortened or apocopated form of *yāshúbbh*, “he will return,” and as such may be used to express a wish, command, or condition, or even, as it seems to us in this place, to emphasise the subjective and



personal element in the statement. There is no need to follow Cheyne and Marti in changing the word into the past tense *shābh*, "he returned," nor to adopt Duhm's pointing of "and" as *waw* consecutive or conversive, in order to translate the future tense as past, "and Thou hast comforted me." It is indeed quite unnecessary to read a past tense into the verbs; and the similar construction in *Hosea* vi. 1 suggests not a past, but a future meaning for the second verb at least.

In the second couplet of v. 2, we read :

For my strength and song [is] Jah Jehovah;  
And He will become Salvation for me.

It is quite clear that this is deliberately taken from *Exodus* xv. 2, where we find the words,

My strength and song is Jah;  
And He will become Salvation for me.

So the comparison of the future deliverance with that of the Exodus is made the clearer and the more remarkable. The form of the word for "song," we note, is not merely that for "my song" with the "my" omitted, but really a collateral form of the ordinary feminine word. The versions supply "my" from the preceding "my strength," as we also naturally do; but they cannot therefore be held to witness against the Massoretic text, even though two Hebrew manuscripts insert the suffix "my."

The name Jah Jehovah is found again only in xxvi. 4. *Jāh* or *Yāh* is a shortened form of *Jāhû* or *Yāhû*, itself a shortened form of the word we pronounce Jehovah. It has been assumed that the name "Jehovah" was added by a copyist to explain the rarer form "Jah," because the original passage in *Exodus* has "Jah" alone. Some Hebrew manuscripts also omit the word "Jehovah";

and the hexaplar edition of the Greek Vulgate has but one Divine Name in this place. Delitzsch, however, would retain both words, explaining the relation of the “Jah Jehovah” in *Isaiah* to the simple “Jah” of *Exodus* as the surpassing of the type by the antitype. And Alexander holds that the presence of the form “Jah Jehovah” in another passage of this very book precludes the word “Jehovah” here, at least in the absence of external evidence, from being omitted as superfluous.

God, says the prophet, is the Salvation of Israel; and the faithful will draw water from the wells of that Salvation. This refers to the miraculous gifts of water in the wilderness, both at Rephidim, *Exodus* xvii. 6, and at Kadesh, *Numbers* xx. 11. St. Paul will speak of those waters as spiritual and as derived from a spiritual Rock, even from Christ our Lord, 1 *Corinthians* x. 4. So the Apostle will refer the material water to its spiritual Cause, and endow the effect with the power and nature of that Cause, as St. John Chrysostom says, “The nature of the rock did not give forth the water, because that nature alone would never have welled up in streams. But it was another kind of rock, even a spiritual one, that was always ready to work, even Christ, who was present in all places and working miracles in all cases.’ *Isaiah* makes the waters directly significant of God; and *Jeremiah*, ii. 13, will name God “the fountain of living water,” as our Lord Himself will one day stand and cry, “If any man thirst, let him come to Me, and let him drink,” *John* vii. 37.

The second stanza commences like the first, except that now the plural is used.

xii. 4. And you will say in that day—

Thank Jehovah :

Call [Him] by His Name.

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Make known His achievements among the peoples :  
Remind [them] that His name is exalted.

5. Chant Jehovah,  
For He has done sublimely.

[Be] this made known  
In all the earth.

6. Shout, and cry out,  
Inhabitress of Zion.

For great amid thee  
[Is] the Holy One of Israel.

In this hymn Isaiah takes his text from *Psalms* ix. 12 :

Chant to Jehovah,  
[Who is] sitting [in] Zion.

Declare His achievements among the peoples.

And the prophet himself gives the text for *Psalms* cv. :

1. Thank Jehovah :  
Call [Him] by His Name.  
Make known His achievements among the peoples :

2. Sing to Him.

Chant to Him :  
Utter in [song] all His miracles.

The words appear again in 1 *Chronicles* xvi. 8 :

8. Thank Jehovah :  
Call [Him] by His Name.  
Make known His achievements among the peoples :

9. Sing to Him.

Chant to Him :  
Utter in [song] all His miracles.

The first couplet calls the faithful to thank Jehovah, and completes the parallelism by an invitation to invoke Him by His sacred name Jehovah, as Elijah had done on Carmel about one hundred and thirty years before, 1 *Kings*



xviii. 24. In the second couplet, it has been disputed whether we should render the Hebrew word by "that," or by "because." We have chosen "that," because we judge from a comparison of the line with its parallel that the exaltation of Jehovah's Name is the object to be recalled, not the reason for the reminding.

Finally, some particular words need attention. That for "exalted" has already been used of Jehovah in ii. 11, 17. That for "sublimely" is really a feminine noun meaning "sublimity." It comes from a root signifying "to lift oneself up," "to be exalted," and is almost peculiar to Isaiah, who uses it here, in ix. 17, xxvi. 10, xxviii. 1, 3. Elsewhere the word occurs only in the *Psalms* xvii. 10, lxxxix. 10, and xciii. 1. The word in the text for "known" is *m'yuddá'ath*, the Pual or passive intensive form, and implies something with which one is familiar, as in the masculine it is the "my acquaintance" of the *Psalms* xxxiv. 12, lv. 14, lxxxviii. 9, 19. The Massoretic note, however, requires us to read *wāw* instead of *yôdh*, so that the word becomes *mûdhá'ath*, the Hophal, or passive of the causative form, "made known." We have already met the word for "shout" in x. 30; and it is found again in the same form, imperative Piel, in liv. 1. The other imperative in the line is from the Qal of *rānān*, "to cry out" for joy or grief. From the same root comes the name Arnon, the "roaring" river of Moab. The "inhabitress" includes the whole population, as the city is personified. The Hebrew word is used in the same way by Micah five times in i. 11-15.

Isaiah, it will be seen, closes this collection of prophecies with his characteristic expression, the "Qadôsh" or "Holy One of Israel." As Delitzsch finely says, it is, as it were, the anagram of the author.

## CONCLUSION

IN 734 B.C., after the hymn contained in c. xii. of his volume, Isaiah relapsed into silence. Swiftly the devastation he had prophesied fell upon Damascus. In 733 and 732, public interest centred in the fate of that city. But from 731 to 728, the world was occupied with the relations between Assyria and Babylonia. During those years of peace for Syria, the complete apostasy of Ahaz crowned a story of graces refused and prophecies unheeded. Yet not once was Isaiah's silence broken.

While Isaiah was chanting the triumphal Hymn which we have read, Tiglath-pileser was marching back to his own land, having left a statue of himself in the palace of Gaza as a memorial of his victory. On his way, he found a new ruler in Samaria, for

Hoshea, the son of Elah, conspired [in] a conspiracy  
Against Pekah, the son of Remaliah,  
And struck him, and put him to death,  
And reigned instead of him. —2 *Kings* xv. 20.

Pekah had been enthroned in the preceding year, 735; and the latter months of that year, together with the earlier of 734, are reckoned as two years, for which the Massoretic text, through a copyist's error, reads twenty. Pekah's predecessor, the Assyrian vassal and pro-Assyrian Pekahiah, also is said to have reigned two years, as he ascended the throne in 736 and was murdered in 735 by the anti-Assyrian Pekah. There is, however, this diffi-

culty in Pekah's case, that he is said to have died in the twentieth year of Jotham, *2 Kings* xv. 30; and it seems hard to reconcile such a statement with his death in 734, when Ahaz was reigning, as well as with the statement in *2 Kings* xv. 33 and *2 Chronicles* xxvii. 1, that Jotham reigned only sixteen years, and with the fact that Hoshea's accession also is dated by the twelfth of Ahaz, *2 Kings* xvii. 1. We may confidently accept the statement in *2 Kings* xv. 33 and *2 Chronicles* xxvii. 1, as to the sixteen years' limit of Jotham's reign, that period including both his vice-regency under Uzziah and his own sole sovereignty. We may also regard the "twelve" in *2 Kings* xvii. 1, as a scribe's error for "two," the year being really the second of Ahaz' reign. Still we have the statement in *2 Kings* xv. 30, as to the twentieth year of Jotham, the son of Uzziah. The words are not found in the hexaplar edition of the Greek Vulgate; and it has been suggested that a copyist may have read "in the year twenty of Jotham," instead of "in the year two of Ahaz, the son of Jotham. In any case, the doubtful state of the Massoretic text in that sentence has been fully recognised by Thenius, Hitzig, Bähr, Schrader. Grätz, Wellhausen, and many others.

Tiglath-pileser III, in his own annals, has left us an account of these affairs:

- Line 6. The district of Gal[ilee], the district of Abil-akka,  
At the entrance of the land of Omri,
- 7. The wide land of [Naphta]li, in all its extent,  
I united to the territories of Assyria.
- 8. I appointed my officers and magistrates over them.  
Hanno of the city of Gaza
- 9. Fled before my weapons,  
Escaped to the land of Egypt.  
The city of Gaza



10. I took. [I despoiled] his possessions and his gods.  
And the image of my majesty
11. I erected in his palace.  
I counted the gods of their land [as spoil].
12. I laid tribute on them . . . .  
And like a bird,
13. He left his hiding-place in fear and surrendered.  
I restored him to his place.
14. Gold, silver, many-coloured garments, linen cloth,
15. . . . many . . . .  
I received.  
The land of Omri
16. [I conquered. I] slew [its warriors.]  
[I appointed] officers [over it].  
The whole of its inhabitants
17. I transported with their goods to Assyria.  
They overthrew Pekah their king.  
And Hoshea
18. I appointed as ruler over them.  
Ten talents of gold and . . . talents of silver as their  
tribute  
I received.  
And I transported them to Assyria.

The word we have read as Galilee, or Galîl, is read by others as Gilead, the land east of the Jordan and south of Bashan. Sometimes, however, as in *Joshua* xxii. 9, the name Gilead was applied to the whole region between Mount Hermon and the river Arnon. Certainly *2 Kings* xv. 29 includes both Galilee and Gilead among the places devastated by Tiglath-pileser III. But in the inscription from which we quote that monarch's own account, the disputed word is defined as the name of a district "at the entrance of the land of Omri." Therefore, as M'Curdy argues in his *History, Prophecy, and the Monuments*, the word cannot be Gilead. As to Abil-akka, there is no objection to our regarding it as meant for Abel [beth] Ma'achah. The land of Omri is, of course,

that of the Ten Tribes, ruled by Omri, 1 *Kings* xvi. 16, who founded Samaria about 879 B.C., 1 *Kings* xvi. 24.

So in 734 B.C., Hoshea, of the pro-Assyrian party in Samaria, succeeded Pekah of the anti-Assyrian party, and submitted to Tiglath-pileser, then returning to Nineveh. The Assyrian king gladly enough confirmed Hoshea in the kingdom of Israel, and went home for the winter. In the following year, 733, he came down like a giant refreshed with wine against Damascus, only to find its gates shut in his face. In his rage, he lays waste the suburbs and royal gardens; and having destroyed the villages and small towns of the district, he impales many men on stakes around Damascus. Among his vassals in camp is Panammu, the son of Bar-Tsur, from Ya'di and Sam'al in northernmost Syria. And most loyal among those vassals was he, for he owed his throne to the Assyrian king. Of this Panammu we learn not only from his own Aramaic inscription on the statue of the sun-god Hadad at Gergin, but also from that his son Bar-Rekhubh made on a memorial stone found in the cemetery of Takhtaly Bunar at Zinjîrli. As the latter describes the death of Panammu at the siege of Damascus, the reading of it may help us to picture the circumstances of the time.

“Bar-Rekhubh placed this statue to his father, to Panammu son of Bar-Tsur, king of Ya'di.

It is a memorial of the year of the deliverance of my father Panammu from the fate of his father.

The gods of Ya'di delivered him from the destruction which was in the house of his father.

And his god Hadad arose, and established his throne.

There was one who . . . . and sat and destroyed . . . . in the house of his father, and slew his father, Bar-Tsur, and slew seventy kinsmen of his father . . . . .  
 . . . . . And with the rest . . he filled the prisons,

and made the desolate cities more than the inhabited cities . . . .

[And Hadad said] you have set a sword in my house, and you have slain one of my sons. And I also will cause the sword to be in the land of Ya'di . . . . . against Panammu, son of Qaral . . . . .

He destroyed . . . . grain and corn and wheat and barley. And a *peres* [of wheat] rose to a shekel, and a *shatrabh* [of barley] to a shekel, and an *asnabh* of drink to a shekel.

And my father brought [a present] to the king of Assyria; and he made him king over the house of his father; and he removed the stone of destruction from the house of his father.

[And he released] the gods of Ya'di from distress. . . . .

And he opened the prisons, and he released the captives of Ya'di.

And my father arose, and he released the women of . . . . . the house of the slain and . . . . .

[And he rebuilt] the house of his father, and he made it better than it had been before.

And wheat and barley and grain and corn were abundant in his days. And then food and drink were . . . . cheap of price.

And in the days of my father Panammu he [the king of Assyria] appointed some as masters of villages and masters of the chariot. And he seated my father Panammu in the place of the kings of Kebar. . . . .

My father, whether he owned silver or whether he owned gold, in his wisdom and in his justice, he held by the wing of his lord, the king of Assyria.

The king of Assyria set him over the governors and brethren of Ya'di. And his lord the king of Assyria set him over the kings of Kebar.

He ran by the wheel of his lord Tiglath-pileser, the king of Assyria, in his encampments from the rising of the sun and unto its setting.

[And the king of Assyria conquered] the four quarters of the earth. And he brought the daughters [the populations] of the sunrise to the sunset. And he brought the daughters of the sunset to the sunrise.



And my father . . . . .

And to his border his lord Tiglath-pileser added cities from the border of Gurgum. . . . .

And my father Panammu, son of Bar-'Tsur . . . . .

And also, my father Panammu died while following his lord Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, in the camp.

And the heir of the kingdom bewept him. And the whole camp of his lord the king of Assyria bewept him.

And his lord, the king of Assyria, afflicted his soul, and appointed a weeping for him on the way, and he brought my father from Damascus to this place.

In my days [he was buried], and the whole of his house [bewept him].

And I, Bar-Rekhubh, son of Panammu,—for the justice of my father and for my justice, my lord seated me on the throne of my father Panammu, the son of Bar-'Tsur.

And I have raised this statue . . . . for my father Panammu, the son of Bar-'Tsur. And I have built . . . . before the tomb of my father, Panammu.

As for this memorial, may Hadad and El and Rekhubh-el, the Baal of the house, and Shemesh and all the gods of Ya'di [defend it] before gods and before men."

For his own palace, Bar-Rekhubh made another inscription, which has been found on the hill of Zinjîrli.

"I [am] Bar-Rekhubh, son of Panammu, king of Sam'al, servant of Tiglath-pileser, lord of the four parts of the earth.

For my father's justice and for my justice, my lord Rekhubh-El and my lord Tiglath-pileser made me sit upon the throne of my father.

And my father's house toiled more than all.

And I ran at the wheel of my lord, the king of Assyria, in the midst of great kings, owners of silver and owners of gold.

And I took my father's house, and made it better than the house of [any] one of the great kings ; and my brethren the kings coveted all the good [condition] of my house.

And my fathers, the kings of Sam'al, had not a good house.

It was a house of rest for them, and it was a summer

house for them, and it was a winter house. And I built this house."

In the next year, 732 B.C., Damascus fell. The siege and its issue are described by Tiglath-pileser III himself in these words:

" . . . . Like a mouse he [Rezin] entered the great gate of his city.

[I took his] chiefs alive with my hands [and] I caused them to be raised up and to view his land on stakes.

I collected forty-five camps of soldiers [in the provin]ce of his city; and I shut him up like a bird in a cage.

I cut down his plantations [fields . . . . and] woods, which were without number, and I did not leave one.

I besieged, I captured [the city] of Chādara, the house of Rezin's father, of the land of the Syrians, where he was born.

I carried off 800 people with their goods . . . . their men, their sheep. I carried off 750 captives of the city Kurussa . . . . [captives] of the city of the Irmaites, 550 captives of the city of Metuna.

I destroyed 591 cities . . . . of 16 districts of the land of Syria as [if they were only] heaps [left by a] flood."

So the Assyrian king, as Isaiah viii. 8, x. 22, before him, compares the Assyrian invasion to a flood. In 2 *Kings* xvi. 9, the account is more summary. There we read that "the king of Syria went up to Damascus, and seized it, and exiled it to Kir, and he put Rezin to death." Josephus, in his *Antiquities*, IX. xii. 3, identifies Kir, which was probably near Elam, *Isaiah* xxii. 6, with Upper Media, and adds that Damascus was planted with Assyrian colonists. Then was fulfilled the prophecy of *Isaiah* viii. 4:

One shall bear away the wealth of Damascus.

And the words of Amos, i. 4, 5, also were realised:

- i. 4. And I shall send a fire into the house of Hazael;  
And it will eat the palaces of Ben-Hadad.

5. And I shall break the bar [of the gate] of Damascus  
And I shall cut off [him who is] sitting [enthroned] from  
the level valley of Aven,  
And [him who is] holding [the] mace from Beth-Eden;  
And the people of Syria will be exiled,  
Said Jehovah.

Tiglath-pileser III was now master of Syria. He himself tells how Mitinti of Ashkelon became insane through fear on hearing of Rezin's fate. Then the Assyrian king, in that same year, 732, and in Damascus, held a great levee of his vassals. Among those who came with tribute were Sanibu from Ammon, Salamānu or Solomon from Moab, Qaushmalak, the "Bow of Melek," from Edom, Hanno from Gaza, and Ahaz from Judah. Ahaz indeed was already utterly apostate, for we read in *2 Chronicles* xxviii. 23, 24, "And he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, who were smiting him; and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria are helping them, I shall sacrifice to them, and they will help me." Now in Damascus, his weak, impressionable spirit is moved by the spectacle of a great altar. This had probably been raised to Rimmon; for there was a great temple to that idol in Damascus, as we learn from Naaman's speech to Elisha, *2 Kings* v. 18; and the cult was popular, as we gather from such names as Tab-Rimmon, *1 Kings* xv. 8. The idol itself was really the Babylonian and Assyrian Rammân, god of the thunder, and armed like the Roman Jupiter with thunderbolts. The conduct of Ahaz in regard of the altar is described in *2 Kings* xvi. 10-16.

10. And the king Ahaz went to meet Tiglath-pileser,  
The king of Assyria, [at] Damascus.  
And he saw the altar, which [was] in Damascus.  
And the king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest



- The likeness of the altar and the model of it  
[According] to all the work of it.
11. And Urijah the priest built the altar.  
According to all that the king Ahaz sent from Damascus,  
So Urijah the priest made [it],  
Until the coming of the king Ahaz from Damascus.
  12. And the king came from Damascus ;  
And the king saw the altar ;  
And the king approached upon the altar ;  
And he offered upon it.
  13. And he burnt his burnt offering and his meal offering ;  
And he poured his libation ;  
And he sprinkled the blood of the peace offerings, which  
were his,  
Upon the altar.
  14. And as to the bronze altar, which was before Jehovah,  
He brought [it] near from before the House,  
From between the [new] altar and the House of Jehovah ;  
And he put it upon the side of the [new] altar, northwards.
  15. And the king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying,  
Upon the great altar burn the morning burnt offering and  
the evening meal offering  
And the king's burnt offering and his meal offering,  
And the burnt offering of all the people of the land,  
And their meal offering and their libation.  
And all the blood of a burnt offering  
And all the blood of a sacrifice,  
Sprinkle upon it.  
And the bronze altar will be for me to inquire [by].

It was such a command as that Antiochus would give later; and such a desolation as that Jerusalem would see, when a heathen altar would rest on the great altar of burnt offering for three years from the 25th of December, 168 B.C. But as to Ahaz, the Chronicler, II. xxviii. 24, 25, tells us further :

24. And Ahaz collected the vessels of the House of God ;  
And he cut up the vessels of the House of God ;

- And he shut the doors of the House of Jehovah ;  
 And he made altars for himself in every corner in Jerusalem.  
 25. And in every city of Judah, in each he made high places  
 To burn incense to other gods ;  
 And he provoked Jehovah, the God of his fathers.

In 2 *Kings* xvi. 17, 18, there is a similar picture :

17. And the king Ahaz cut off the [ornamented] margins of the  
 stands [on which the lavers rested] ;  
 And he removed the laver from upon them ;  
 And he took down the [molten] sea from upon the bronze  
 oxen, which [were] under it.  
 And he put it upon the pavement of stones.  
 18. And as to the portico for the sabbath,  
 Which they [had] built in the House,  
 And as to the entrance of the king, the outer [one]—  
 He changed the House of Jehovah,  
 On account of [the fear of] the king of Assyria.

We need not pause to consider the many questions connected with this v. 18. The word for "portico" may mean a portico, or a covered place, or a covered way for Sabbath use, or a canopied seat for the king at the Sabbath sacrifice. Much difficulty has been found in the word for "changed." It is the Hiphil or causative form of *sābhābh*, "to turn." Thenius and Ewald render it as "altered in," and Dathe, Mauer, and Kiel as "removed into," the objects being "the portico" and "the entrance." We, with much hesitation, explain the construction as due to the author's breaking off an enumeration of details to sum the whole result in one sentence. Finally, because of the context, we render the word *mipp'nē*, "from the face of," "on account of," as "on account of the fear of." In this we follow the Latin Vulgate of *Judges* ix. 21.

Sayce, in his *Times of Isaiah*, pp. 47, 48, regards the visit of Ahaz to Damascus as also responsible for the "sundial of Ahaz," *Isaiah* xxxviii. 8; and thinks it possible

that Ahaz founded the library at Jerusalem, *Proverbs* xxv. 1, where scribes, like those of Assyria and Babylon, were occupied in copying ancient records. Tiglath-pileser III, having made a short expedition against Samsi, queen of Arabia; and having placed Idi-bi'ilu over the land of Musru, received tribute, including 150 talents of gold, from Mitinna of Tyre, and a mass of wealth, including 1000 talents of silver from the kingdom of Tubal in Cappadocia. He then went back to his native land for a struggle with Babylon. For five years, from the latter half of 732 to the earlier half of 727, there was peace in Syria. Apparently, the apostasy of Ahaz meant deliverance for Judah; but God, as an Italian proverb reminds us, does not pay every Saturday night. And still his prophet Isaiah remained silent.

Meanwhile Babylon was looming large on the horizon. In 731, the year after his capture of Damascus, Tiglath-pileser III made friends with the priests in Northern and Central Babylonia, and entered their cities. He marched against the Aramæan Puqudu, the Pekod of *Jeremiah* l. 21, and *Ezekiel* xxiii. 23, on the east of the Tigris, and drove them towards Elam. Then he had to deal with the Chaldeans north of the Persian Gulf, as they had enthroned one of their kings, Ukīnzir, in Babylon. At the moment, that chief was in his own capital, Shapiya, where he held out against the Assyrian monarch during the remainder of 731, the whole of 730, and the early part of 729, when at last the Chaldeans, including Merodach-Baladan, then a youth, surrendered. The conqueror now enters Babylon under his own name Pûlu, and not under that of Tiglath-pileser, which he had assumed at his usurpation to connect himself with Saul's contemporary, the mighty warrior Tiglath-pileser I, of the "Prism-Inscription" and the "Broken Obelisk." In



Babylon, he "took the hand of Bêl," receiving his crown from that idol, for which he became vicegerent. In the following year, 728, he again entered Babylon, and "took the hand of Bêl," performing whatever rites were attached to his office. Meanwhile, he was causing the walls of the "Central Palace," he had rebuilt at Calah, to be inscribed with the records of his reign.

The next year, 727, was momentous for Isaiah, Ahaz, and Tiglath-pileser. To the prophet came inspiration for his great ode against Babylon, cc. xiii., xiv., in which the fate of the Babylonian king and that of Babylon itself are described. Tiglath-pileser, indeed, is now the crowned king of the ancient city and its territory; but the prophecy is not limited to him. He sat for the picture, but only as Wordsworth sat for Browning's "Lost Leader." For the person depicted is rather a symbol of Babylonian sovereignty, an ideal representative of Babylonian kings till the fall of Nabuna'id in 539 B.C.

It also happened in the year 727, that Tiglath-pileser and his vassal Ahaz passed to the judgment of God, and left the scene of their ambition and probation to Shalmaneser IV of Assyria and Hezekiah of Judah. It was Tebeth, the latter half of December and the earlier half of January, and therefore mid-winter, when Tiglath-pileser died. The Philistines, mindful of 734 and the expedition against Hanno of Gaza, might well feel jubilant, because the great soldier of Assyria would nevermore molest them. But Isaiah raised his voice in warning. In a few words, he foretold a future invasion, and foreshowed the smoke of burning towns on the road from the north to Philistia.

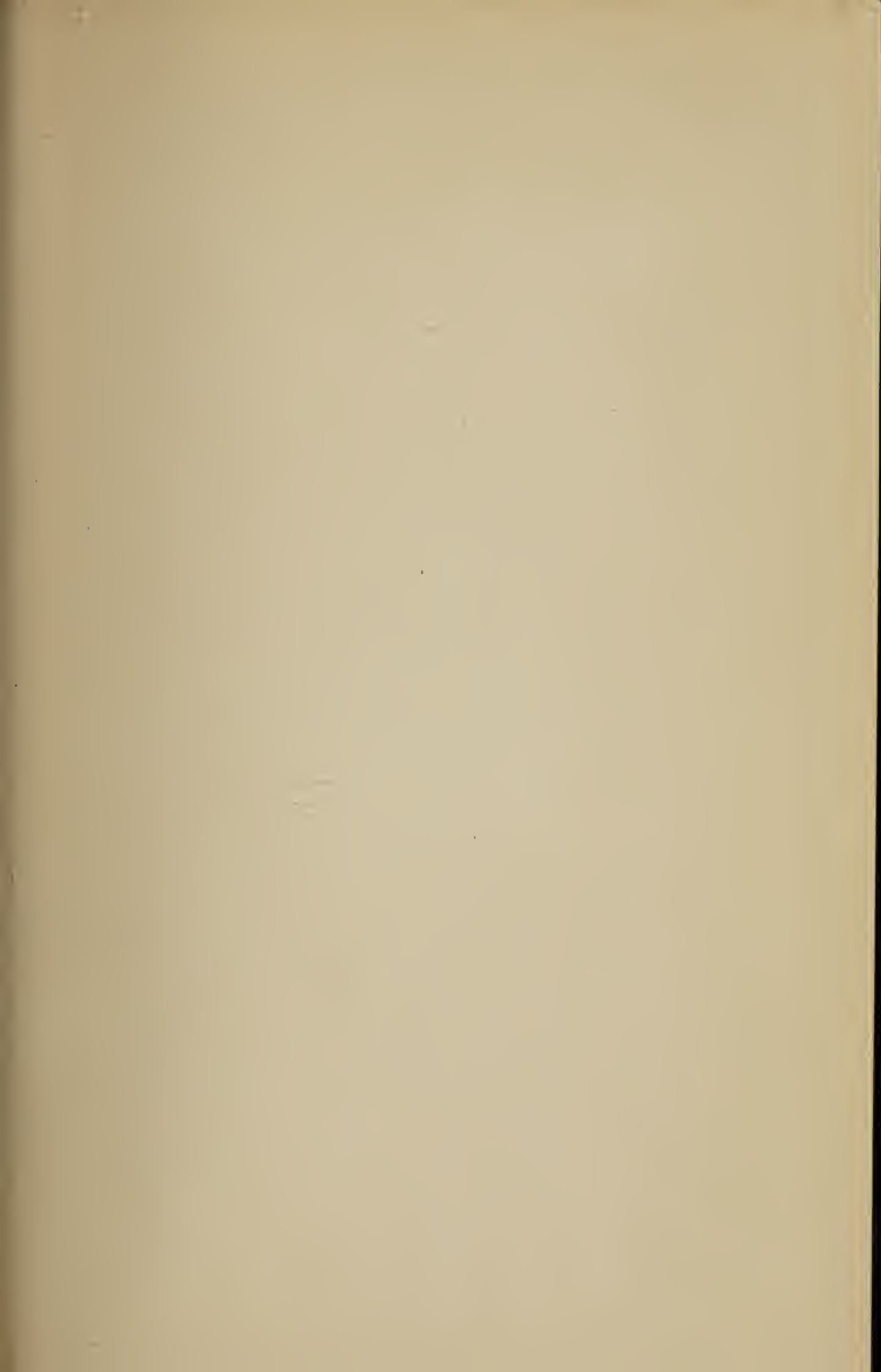
A new period will open for Isaiah with the accession of Hezekiah. He had spoken to Ahaz and his people clearly enough. And clearly enough these had chosen

their part. During those dark years, the prophet, his wife, his two sons, and his few disciples had apparently no influence. Yet, like those in Roman catacombs in pagan days, and like those on Irish hillsides in penal times, they illustrated the continuity of the Dispensation and maintained the Faith destined to triumph.





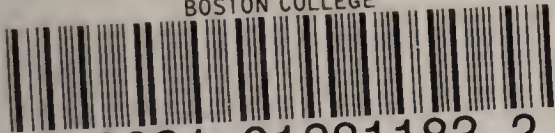








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